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TRAVELER

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50 TOURS OF A LIFETIME

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**CALIFORNIA'S
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A FLOWER CHILD
RETURNS TO
HER ROOTS

**FRANCE'S
SACRED FIELDS**

WAR AND
REMEMBRANCE
IN LORRAINE

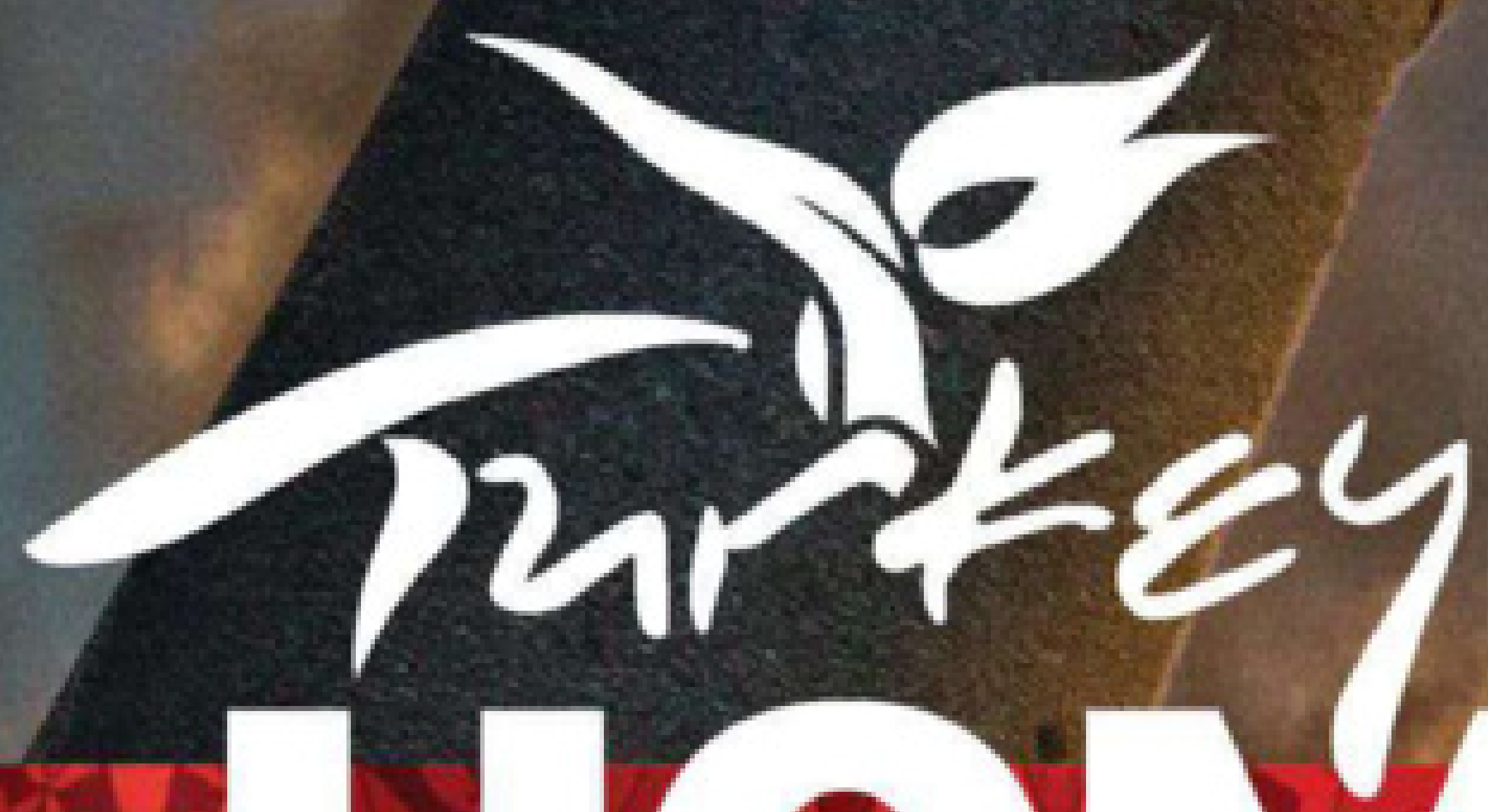
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Wise travelers know when (and where) to let someone else lead—and that the most memorable guided trips turn facts and experiences into truth and insight. Let our ninth annual list of best-in-class itineraries stoke your curiosity about the world's wonders, from the Botswana bush to the Pyrenees peaks

BY MARGARET LOFTUS

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All quiet on the western front? A century later, World War I echoes are as loud as northeastern France is lively

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A mom takes her son on the long and winding hippie trail that she traded decades ago for a straighter course

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THE GREAT ADVENTURE: An American cuts off ties for a month on New Guinea yet leaves with deeper connections than he imagined possible

STORY & PHOTOGRAPHS BY CARL HOFFMAN

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drips with
gastronomy,
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Carl Hoffman sits with his new friends.

Into the Mists of New Guinea

TWO YEARS AGO, contributing editor Carl Hoffman shared with me an idea for his next book. It struck a chord because when I was ten I was drawn to the subject: the mysterious disappearance in 1961 of Michael Rockefeller, the youngest son of future Vice President Nelson Rockefeller, in what was then Netherlands New Guinea (now Papua, a province of Indonesia).

Did he drown? Was he shredded by a crocodile or shark? Or, most grisly, was he eaten by cannibals?

"I became aware of Rockefeller in my 20s, and his story never left me," Hoffman says. "He just disappeared into myth, leaving many unanswered questions. I thought I'd go into this alien world and discover the truth of what took place." Book contract in hand, he had a researcher comb Dutch archives for any documents on the young man's disappearance, and set out for the Asmat region, where Rockefeller was last seen. I read Hoffman's first draft and made suggestions. He returned to

Asmat with Kickstarter funding, and finished *Savage Harvest: A Tale of Cannibals, Colonialism, and Michael Rockefeller's Tragic Quest for Primitive Art*, a gripping tale of what probably happened. In this issue, on page 78, Hoffman offers a glimpse of a culture few of us will get to experience. It's an example of primal travel.

I was drawn to the mysterious disappearance in 1961 of Michael Rockefeller in what was then Netherlands New Guinea. Did he drown? Or was he eaten by cannibals?

"I had to dig deeply enough into both myself and the place to learn its secrets," Hoffman says. "I discovered how little I really understand foreign cultures, even after all my travels. The experience changed my perspective, made me less cocky."

His book and his story for *Traveler* are paradigms of what good travel journalism does: It makes you think and imagine. Since our sister magazine, *National Geographic Adventure*, went dark, we've made adventure a success online—and now want to bring more off-the-beaten-path experiences to our pages. Let us know what you think. — KEITH BELLOWS

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JOHN T. EDGE

WRITER, LOCAL FLAVOR:
MEMPHIS BBQ, PAGE 40

HOME: Oxford, Mississippi, within walking distance of “the Square.” I’m director of the Southern Foodways Alliance at the University of Mississippi and write for the *Oxford American*, among other publications.

WHAT SUP: My dream dinner would be fried catfish, hush puppies, green onion tassels, and champagne.

BOILED DOWN: Africans transformed the American diet, which is most evident in the American South.



WORTH THE TRIP: Chili-slaw dogs in North Carolina, collard greens in Tennessee, and boudin in Louisiana.

IN VOGUE: From coast to coast, restaurants are reinterpreting southern traditions. The best, such as Seersucker in Brooklyn and Hard Water in San Francisco, pay homage to southern flavors.

HOTCAKES: Five years ago, I traveled through Vietnam and fell in love all over again with *bánh xèo* [sizzling cake]—my 1980s gateway dish to Vietnamese cookery.



KRIS DAVIDSON

PHOTOGRAPHER (ABOVE, AT RIGHT),
“OVER THERE,” PAGE 46

HOME: My family immigrated to the United States from Sweden when I was a kid. As an adult, I have been moving between San Francisco and New Orleans, my current base.

FRENCH CONNECTION: A mile from my house is a residence that was built for Napoleon Bonaparte before he changed his plans to expand his empire here. Now it’s a bar in the French Quarter called Napoleon House; you can have a drink and ponder how things could have been.

BUBBLING UP: After a moving memorial ceremony at the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery, military folks from both the U.S. and France enjoyed music and champagne in the nearby village. I loved seeing American servicemen and service-women chatting with a high-ranking French colonel, who thankfully humored my taking photographs. After I was done, he took a sip of his champagne, gave me a sideways look and a cryptic smile, and ordered me to do 25 push-ups. I just smiled back, not understanding the crisply delivered French command until later.

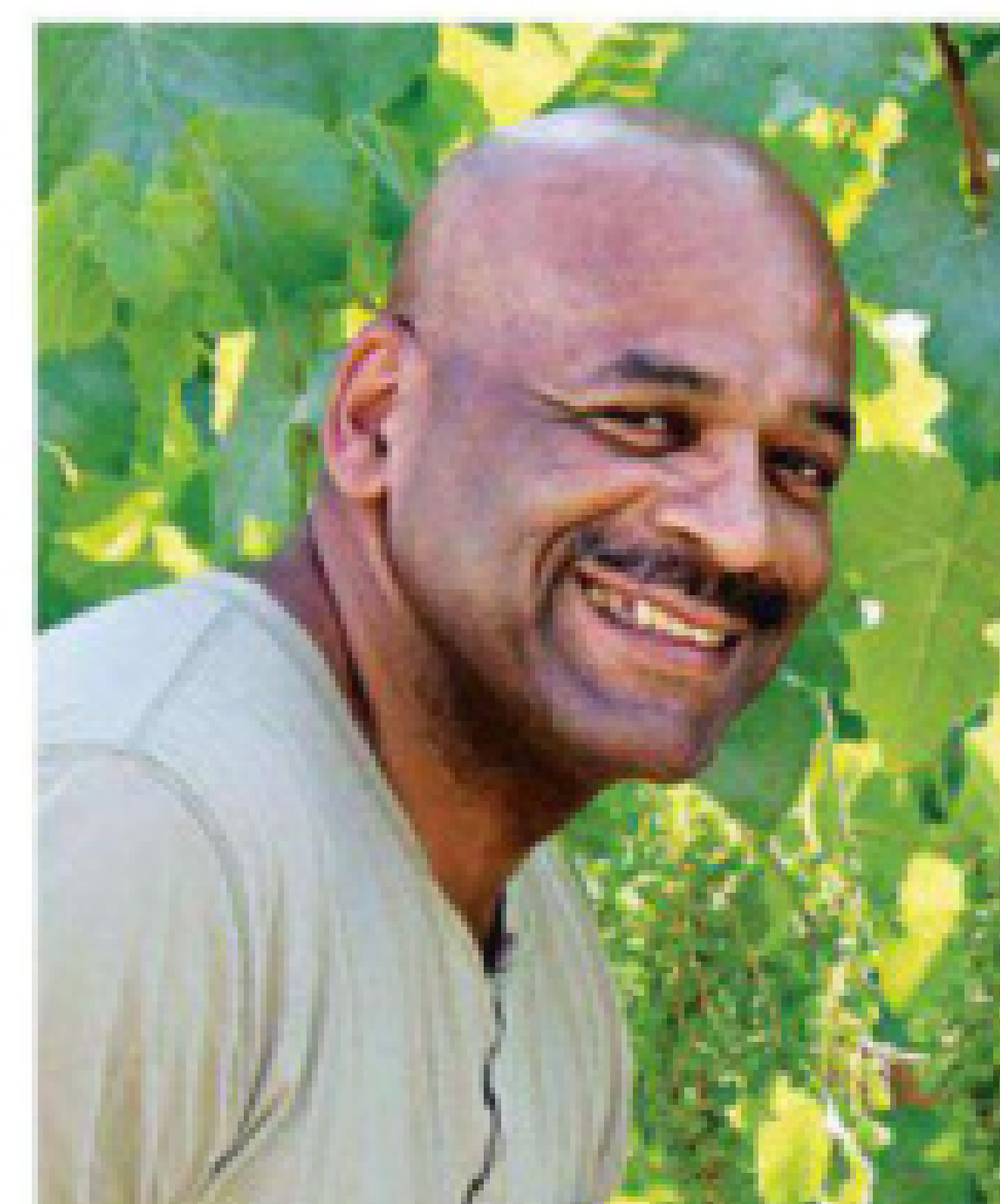
GARY LEE

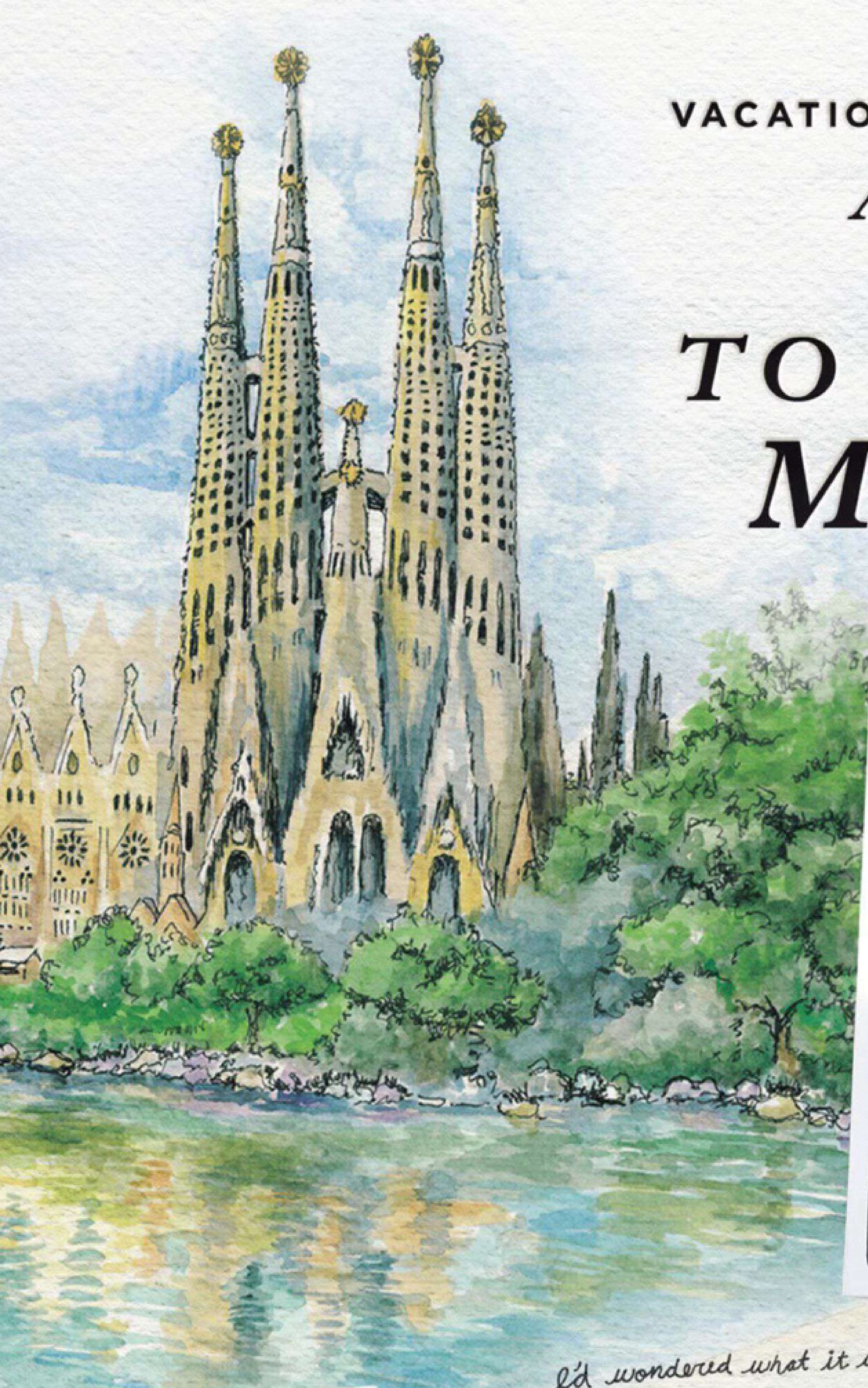
WRITER, MY CITY: LIMA, PERU, PAGE 30

HOME: I divide my time between homes in the Adams Morgan neighborhood of Washington, D.C., and the Vallecito enclave of Arequipa, Peru. Other cities where I have lived—New York, Paris, Moscow—often seemed gangly and complex. Adams Morgan and Vallecito have surprising similarities; both at once feel intimate and urban.

OPEN POLICY: Owning a hotel [Casa Arequipa in Peru] has allowed me to view travel through a new lens. Offering guidance to guests who are only visiting for a few days reminds me that to connect with a place in a short time takes a lot of planning and a mind open to serendipity.

GET ON THE BUS: I adore so many things about bus travel: being able to see the sweep of landscapes from the close-up range of a picture window; winding conversations with quirky, chatty fellow passengers; breaking for coffee on roadside pit stops. One of the most fun journeys I took was on “the bus”—a public bus that circles the Hawaiian island of Oahu. It was a collage of one lush ocean scene after another, punctuated by stops in shopping malls or on the shoulder of a highway. And it only cost a couple of bucks.



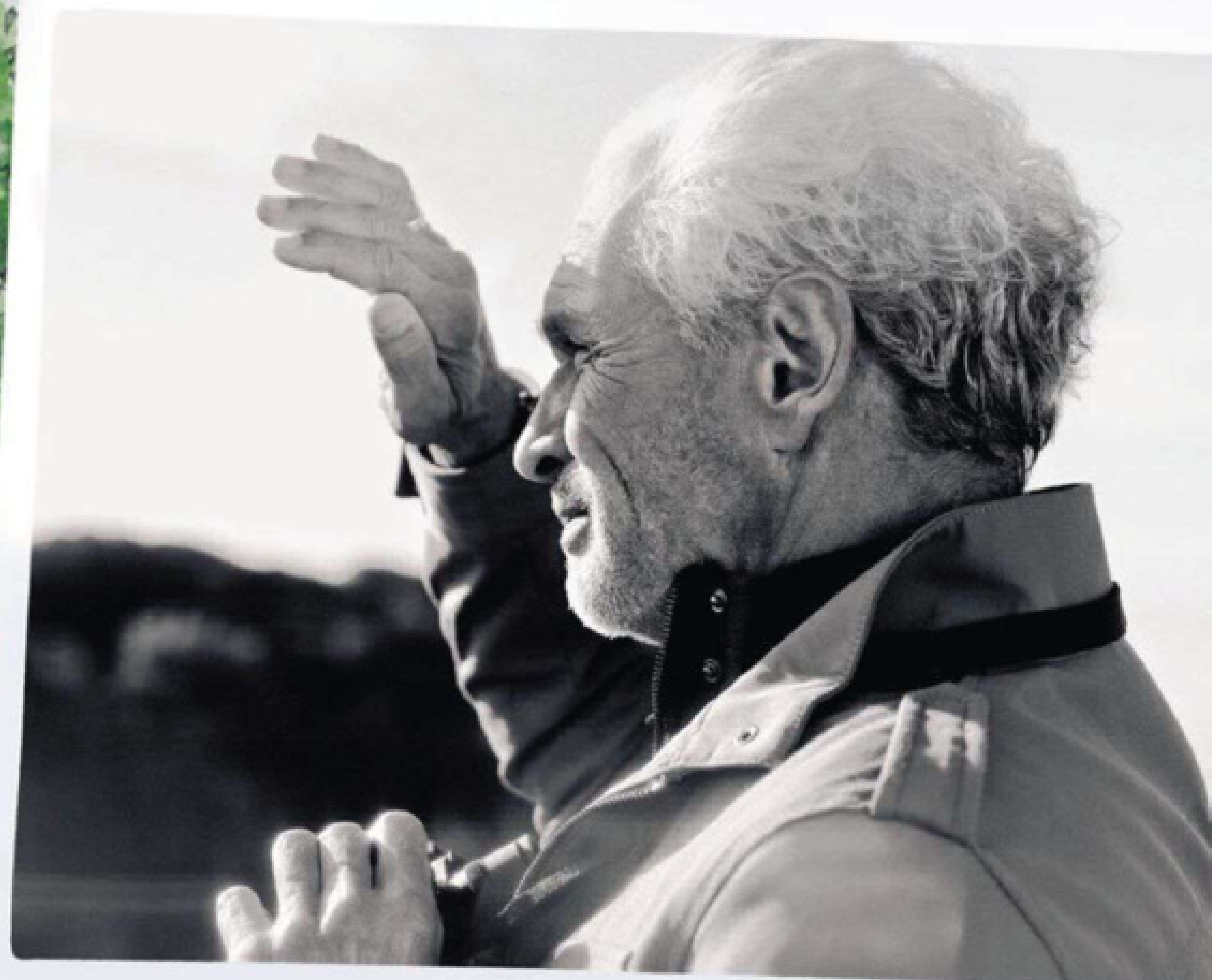


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I'd wondered what it would be like to see La Sagrada Família. Now all I wonder is which part Gaudi imagined first. The architecture? Design? Engineering? Maybe we'll admire all of the above until we get hungry. Or thirsty. Tonight's menu in the Vintage Room is paired with 8 vintage wines, with a few Spanish classics chosen by the Head Sommelier himself. My palate can't wait to be refined.



THE ALL INCLUSIVE



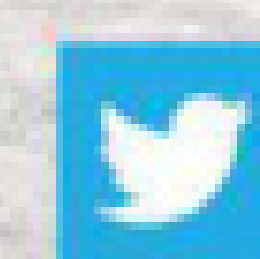
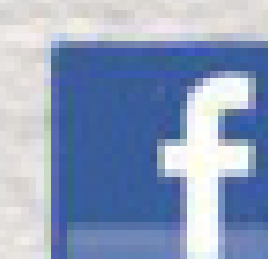
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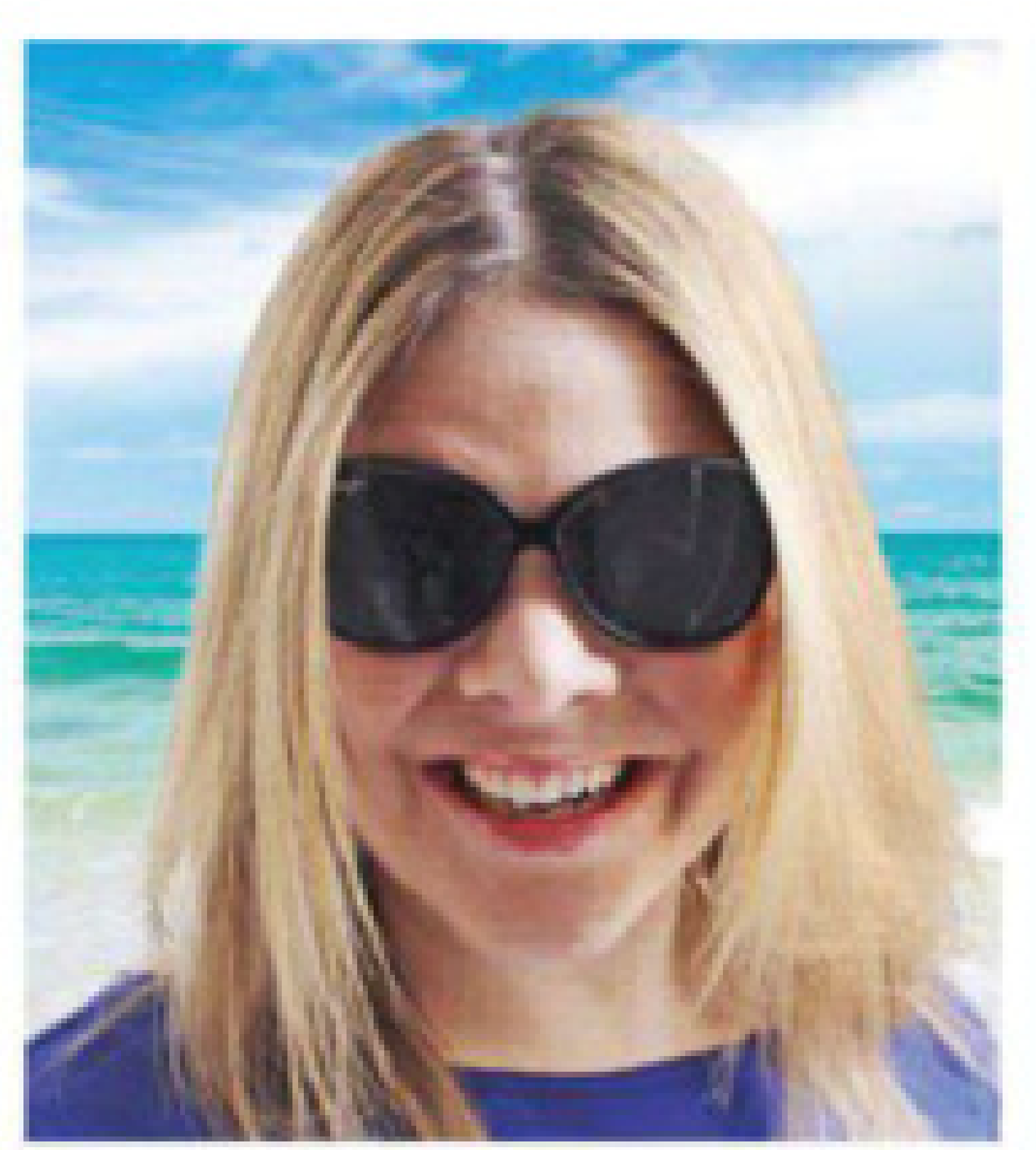
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Our Urban Insider Hits Coastal Color and Sun.



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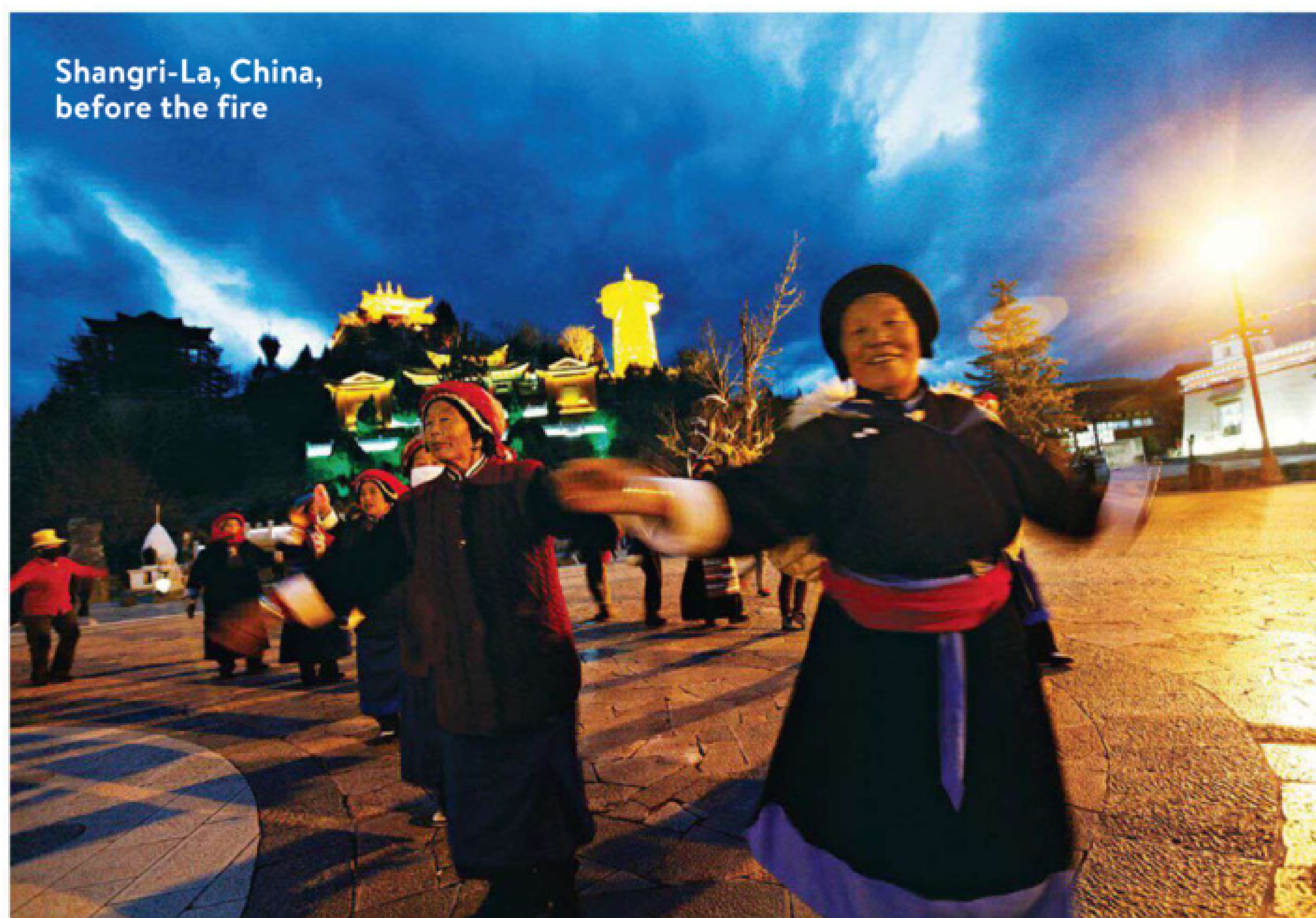
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Shangri-La, China,
before the fire

“The Scuola del Cuoio was one of my favorite Florence finds. I loved watching students engrave and embellish their leather goods.”

—RANDI MILLMAN-BROWN ON
“MADE IN ITALY,” FEB./MARCH 2014

WRITE STUFF In a series about travel writing on our Intelligent Travel blog, Editor at Large Don George gave tips for maximizing time with a researched itinerary.

“Traveling with kids requires a basic framework, but they also help with serendipity,” wrote Shelly Rivoli of **San Francisco, Calif.** “Gas station attendants and hotel clerks recommend local playgrounds and restaurants, and kids have a way of crossing paths with people you might never have met otherwise—with insights that can completely change your trip.”

A Spark of Headlines

TALK TO US

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VISIONS OF SHANGRI-LA inspired writer Scott Wallace’s February/March 2014 cover story, “Over the Horizon,” about China’s Yunnan Province. Unfortunately, soon after the issue went to press, a fire ravaged one of the ancient towns Wallace visited, blazing for many hours and destroying some 240 historic houses. “The fire in old-town Shangri-La was a tragic loss of a treasure trove of traditional Tibetan architecture,” Wallace says. “The city had received a kind of Potemkin-village-style makeover that stole some of its authenticity. But those wood-frame buildings are irreplaceable. It’s also, obviously, a heavy blow to those who lost their homes and businesses. Let’s hope they succeed in building new ones of similar design and materials.”

TRAVEL, RINSE, REPEAT On our Intelligent Travel blog, writer Ben Long extolled “The Joy of Going Back” in a post about a village in Uruguay that he could visit again and again. Readers know how it feels to have their “own little slice

of Eden,” in the words of a commenter waxing poetic about his “Panamanian paradise.” Gaelyn Olmsted of **North Rim, Ariz.**, added, “For 40 years I dreamed of traveling the world. Then I went to South Africa—it captured my spirit. I leave soon for my third visit. It takes time to get a sense of a place and its people.”

ISLAND TIME The December 2013/January 2014 issue highlighted the remote Japanese island of Yakushima. “A Tree-Hugging Princess and Her Island” related Yakushima’s real-life environmental strides to the conservation message of *Princess Mononoke*, a popular anime film set there. The article inspired awe but also a classic travel quandary. “I have mixed feelings about places like this,” wrote Adam Freed of **Pleasantville, Pa.** “I want to experience the beauty of nature firsthand, but places like this need to be protected against too much tourism, lest they lose the very thing that makes them so enchanting.”

IT’S OUR BIRTHDAY Been here long? We want to hear from *Traveler* readers who have subscribed since our 1984 launch. Find contact info at left to participate in anniversary coverage.



ON A ROLL

“Perfect Croissants in Paris” (December 2013/January 2014) got tongues wagging—and mouths drooling, too. “*Mon dieu!*” wrote Jillian Pfund of **Tainan, Taiwan.** “This article made me long for a flaky, perfectly buttery croissant and a crispy flute baguette.”

HOW HWEE YOUNG/EPICORPIS (PEOPLE), FOTOSEARCH RIMAGE FOTOSTOCK (CROISSANT)



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BEHIND THE LENS

Charting New Courses

Online courses lead the latest wave of digital enlightenment. Jumping to the head of the class is a new partnership between National Geographic and The Great Courses, offering two opportunities for curious minds. Taught by National Geographic Fellow and photographer Joel Sartore (above), “The Art of Travel Photography: Six Expert Lessons” and “Fundamentals of Photography” give practical tips on capturing the magic of a moment. Courses are available for digital streaming, download, or on DVD.

■ THEGREATCOURSES.COM/NATGEO

CALL FOR ENTRIES

HIT US WITH YOUR BEST SHOTS

Over the past 25 years of the *National Geographic Traveler* Photo Contest, shutterbugs have entered roughly 375,000 images of everything from starry skies in Oregon to Congolese villagers (right). The next photo we want to see? Yours. Enter your favorite recent travel snapshots by June 30 (\$15 fee); winners are published in *Traveler* and earn travel prizes, including a National Geographic Expedition to Alaska’s Inside Passage, a photo workshop in New Mexico, and a cruise on a Maine windjammer schooner.

■ NATIONALGEOGRAPHIC.COM/TRAVELERPHOTOCONTEST



MILESTONE

HOW DOES A POLISH 10-YEAR-OLD CELEBRATE?

This year marks a decade of Poland’s edition of *Traveler*, which has become the country’s most widely read travel magazine. The Warsaw-based staff will hold a ceremony on May 22 celebrating global travel, from the achievements of a polar-sailing captain to a bus turned roving children’s cinema. “Ten years ago, our readers were mostly tourists who only dreamed of faraway destinations,” says editor Julia Lachowicz. “We are proud of the community we have built of responsible, smart, and adventurous travelers.”



ALL ACCESS

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Packing for spring and summer jet-setting? Even print purists can’t deny the convenience of slipping a slim device loaded with reading material into the carry-on. Digital nomads can keep all their issues of *Traveler* just a tap and a swipe away by subscribing to our electronic edition—filled with extra photos, 360-degree views, and more—on Apple and Android tablets. Bonus for iPad users: For a discounted rate, Print Plus subscribers receive the magazine both in high gloss and high resolution.

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step out of bounds
MONTANA

#MontanaMoment | Grand Prismatic Spring near West Yellowstone, MT—Gateway to Yellowstone National Park

"My first look at the spring from atop the hillside was the first time I saw Yellowstone for what it was: Mother Nature's canvas. The bold colors, the immense size of the crater, the thick blanket of steam coming off the spring on a cold early morning—all amazing feats of beauty." BRAD BECK

The shortest distance between two points is rarely the most rewarding.

That's why the best trips to Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks don't follow a straight line.

The experience of Montana's National Parks is wildly varied—from the world's greatest concentration of geothermal features and the biggest bison herds in the country to rugged glacial peaks and turquoise alpine lakes. But don't stop there.

Outside of Yellowstone and Glacier, Montana's winding roads bring travelers through some of the West's most interesting terrain, intriguing communities and unique events.



Can't-Miss Opportunities

Pompeys Pillar National Monument

Where the Lewis and Clark Expedition camped and literally left their mark. VISITBILLINGS.COM/NATGEO

Montana's Dinosaur Trail

This trail weaves through some of the world's most significant paleontological sites. MISSOURIRIVER.VISITMT.COM

The River's Edge in Great Falls

You can pick up this trail anywhere along its 40-mile length for views of the Missouri River and its many waterfalls. CENTRALMONTANA.COM

The Hiawatha Trail

A 15-mile bike trail across the Bitterroot Mountains, through ten old railroad tunnels and over seven high trestles. GLACIERMT.COM/GEO

Whitefish Mountain Resort

Thawed ski lifts take hikers and bikers right to the top of miles of cross-country and downhill trails. EXPLOREWHITEFISH.COM

Last Chance Gulch

A downtown street lined with historic buildings from the gold rush days. HELENAMT.COM



Runners take in the sunrise along the beautiful sandstone bluffs in Billings, MT



Billings, Montana

Montana's largest city is a beautiful starting point, thanks to excellent airline service from major hubs. Here, you are within close range of the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument—site of Custer's Last Stand—and Pompeys Pillar National Monument, where the Lewis and Clark Expedition camped and literally left their mark. From Billings, it's 60 miles to the charming mountain town of Red Lodge and the northern end of the Beartooth Highway—a steep, spectacular National Scenic Byway to the Northeast Entrance of Yellowstone National Park that rises to elevations more than 10,000 feet. Or head north and east into Missouri River Country and the spectacular interior of Montana.

VISITBILLINGS.COM/NATGEO

MONTANA
step out of bounds



Hiking Neat Coulee along the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument



Hiking the Rocky Mountain Front near the Bob Marshall Wilderness



The River's Edge Trail in Great Falls, MT

Missouri River Country

A couple of interesting lines can be followed through this rugged country. First, there's the Montana Dinosaur Trail, which weaves through some of the world's most significant paleontological sites, with a number of dinosaur museums and public opportunities to dig for bones along the way. Second, the Wild and Scenic Missouri River once traced by Lewis and Clark can be explored today by kayak or canoe. Just as the expedition changed the course of history, the river itself changed the very landscape here, winding and eroding rock outcrops into the surreal shapes of the Upper Missouri Breaks National Monument.

MISSOURIRIVER.VISITMT.COM

Central Montana

Continuing west along the Missouri leads into Central Montana, gateway to the Bob Marshall Wilderness—more than a million acres of untrammeled lands sprawling on both sides of the Continental Divide. Hardy local hikers, hunters and anglers call it “The Bob,” a chummy name for a wild and impressive place. For a more urban but no less naturally beautiful hike, there's the River's Edge in Great Falls, a 40-mile-long trail you can pick up anywhere to view the Missouri River and its many waterfalls.

CENTRALMONTANA.COM



Cracker Lake near Mount Siyeh in Glacier National Park



Glacier Country

Once you've made it this far, the lure of Glacier is quite irresistible. And again, a winding route through the surrounding region known as Glacier Country offers even more to see and do. The Hiawatha Trail, built on the most scenic rail route in the country, has been transformed into a 15-mile bike trail across the Bitterroot Mountains, through ten old railroad tunnels and over seven high trestles. The region has hundreds of miles of hiking trails, from interurban to wilderness, and quick destination hikes like the trail to Holland Falls in the incomparable Swan Valley.

GLACIERMT.COM/GEO

MONTANA
step out of bounds



Vibrant and walkable town of Whitefish, MT

Whitefish, Montana

Just 25 miles from Glacier National Park's West Entrance, the charming ski town of Whitefish transforms into a pedestrian-friendly paradise in the summer months. Just outside town, Whitefish Lake is perfect for water sports, and Whitefish Mountain Resort's 40 miles of mountain-bike trails are just up the road. To top it off, the new Whitefish Trail conservation project boasts 26 miles of recreational trails accessed by seven trailheads in the area. And after your outdoor adventures, a vibrant downtown is waiting—filled with inviting shops, great cuisine, performing arts and personality-filled bars.

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Gates of the Mountains near Helena, MT



Last Chance Gulch in downtown Helena, MT

Helena, Montana

About halfway between Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks, you can wind through Helena's Last Chance Gulch, a downtown street lined with historic buildings from the gold rush days. Aside from being Montana's capitol city, Helena gets national attention for its network of hiking and mountain-biking trails in and around the city. Just outside Helena, there's another fascinating way to get to Point B—through the Gates of the Mountains. Here on the Missouri River, 1,200-foot-tall limestone cliffs seem to block passage, only to shift and open with each turn, like gates revealing the next curve in the river and the mountain landscapes beyond.

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BEST OF THE WORLD

“Just as a solid rock is not shaken by
the storm, even so the wise are not
affected by praise or blame.”

—BUDDHA

Inside

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Weimar, Germany 26

St.-Louis, Senegal 27

Borobudur in
Java, Indonesia

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Capturing Borobudur, a Buddhist site in central Java, in its best light

Come Rain or Shrine in Indonesia

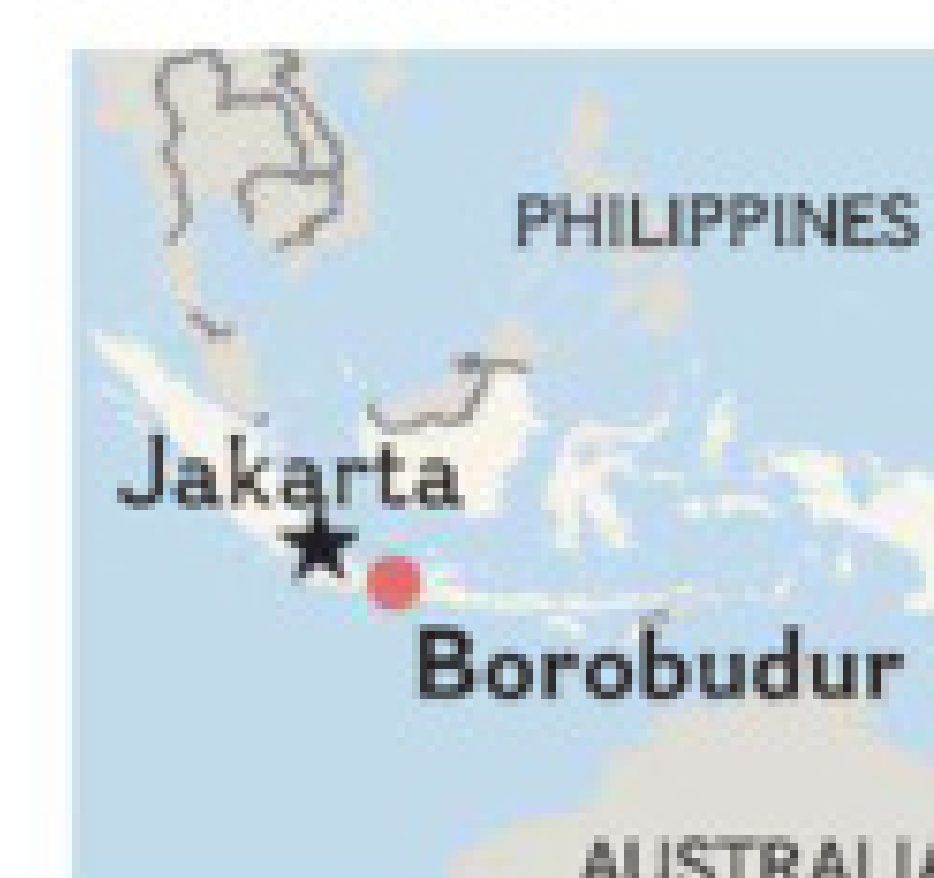
TWO HUNDRED YEARS ago, British statesman Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles rediscovered the sprawling temple of Borobudur on a remote hilltop in Java, Indonesia, hidden under a tangle of thick jungle. Today the shrine endures as a symbol of quiet resilience—the world’s largest Buddhist temple, located in a country with a Muslim majority. If the UNESCO World Heritage site seems to rise above political unrest and economic instability like a lotus blooming in muddy water, that’s by design. Eighth- and ninth-century builders laid out the complex to mirror the form of the sacred flower. Erected during the Sailendra dynasty, which ruled the island of Java for a hundred years, the temple consists of 72 stupas along nine mounting

terraces—a physical representation of the stages in the path to nirvana. Nearly 1,500 bas-relief carvings telling epic narratives scarcely scratch the surface of the stories Borobudur could recount, including a 1985 bomb attack and the 2010 eruption of nearby Mount Merapi. Volcanic ash rained upon Buddhas that sat undisturbed in their bell-shaped stupas, protected by the original perforated chambers. As dawn breaks, visitors follow schoolgirls in headscarves and monks in saffron robes along the circular platforms. The prayerful walk is more than three miles long and a thousand years old. —**SUZANNE WRIGHT**

■ **TIP:** BEGIN ASCENDING THE MONUMENT AT THE EASTERN STAIRWAY; WALK CLOCKWISE AROUND EACH OF NINE LEVELS BEFORE PEAKING.

ATLAS

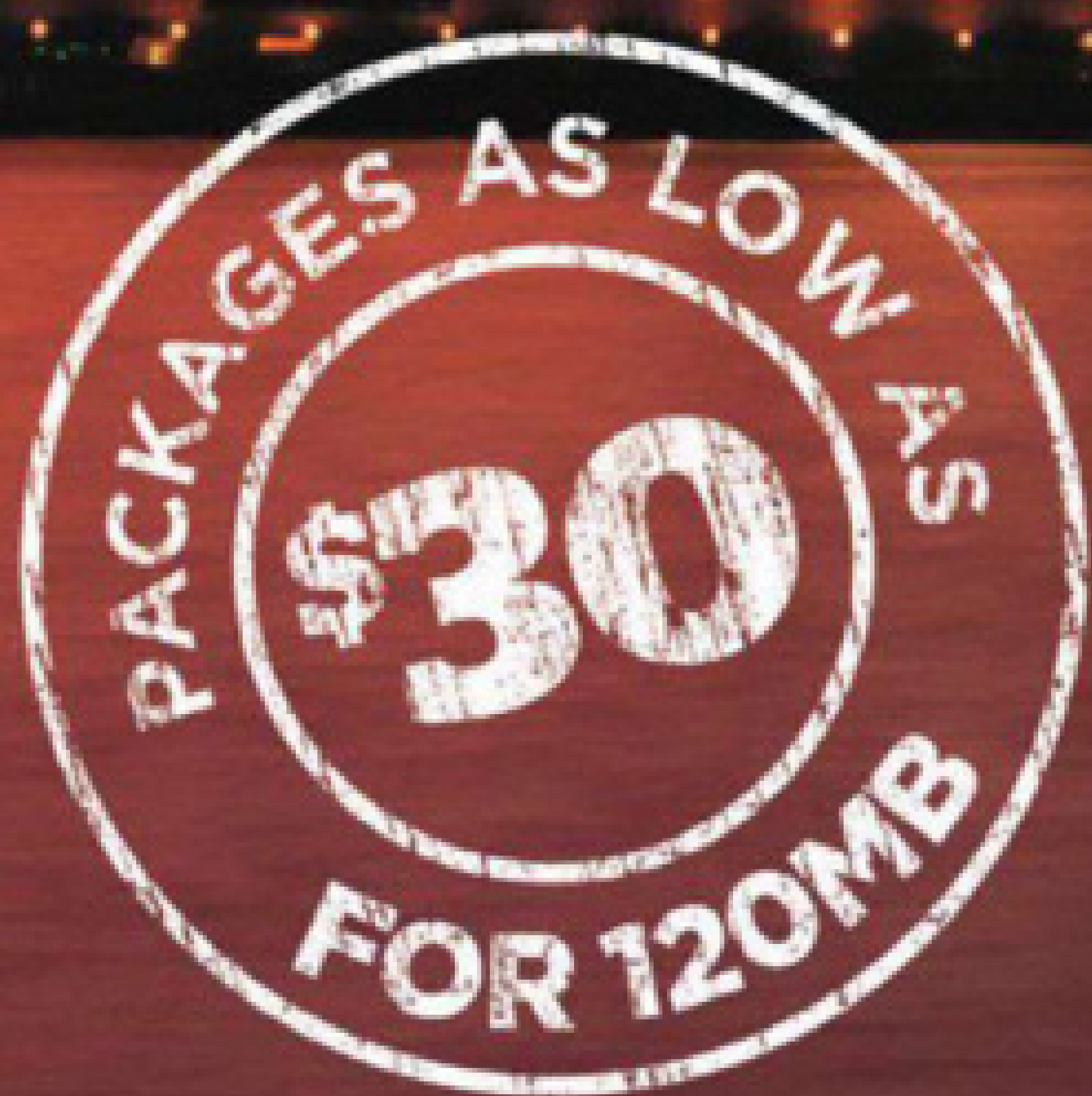
Borobudur, Indonesia



Thomas Stamford Raffles, who first brought Western attention here in 1814, founded Singapore.

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The Glacier Skywalk
in Canada's Jasper
National Park

Canada's Rocky Mountain High

THE GLACIER SKYWALK opens in May, debuting an awe-inspiring vantage of Jasper National Park in Alberta, Canada, while replacing a once dangerous pullout along the Icefields Parkway. A short shuttle from the Glacier Discovery Centre delivers visitors to a cantilevered elliptical observation platform jutting 115 feet into the air. A walk on a glass floor suspended 85 stories above the Sunwapta Valley adds some thrill to the glacial chill of this ecosystem that straddles a triple continental divide. But first, a pathway leading to the skywalk traces the cliffside and gives a scientific primer, including a display of glacial runoff and a small cave revealing rock striations and fossils. All

together it's a grand showcase for the rugged peaks, glaciers, waterfalls, and wildlife of this 144-mile parkway, ranked among the world's most scenic drives. Already racking up accolades including a World Architecture Festival Award, the minimalist skywalk and accompanying pathway harmonize with the environment in ways that are tangible—such as solar power and limited hours—and also conceptual. For instance, designers built the pathway into the native bedrock, explains architectural project leader Jan Kroman, to evoke “a hiking-trail feel, while still being accessible to all.” —**KIMBERLY BUTTON**

■ **TIP:** RIDE AN ICE EXPLORER TO NEARBY ATHABASCA GLACIER TO WALK ON ICE ABOUT AS THICK AS THE EIFFEL TOWER IS TALL.

ATLAS

Jasper National
Park, Alberta



Eating a primarily
vegetarian diet,
Jasper's grizzly
bears sometimes
gorge on up to
200,000 buffalo
berries in one day.

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Weimar's rococo Anna Amalia library, where Goethe served as director for 35 years

The Wunderbar World of Weimar

WEIMAR'S SIZE HAS always belied its moxie. When a fire ravaged the gilt-trimmed Duchess Anna Amalia Library in 2004, locals formed a human chain to save historic masterpieces that included Martin Luther's 1534 Bible. A decade later, the book restorations are finally nearing completion and have ignited renewed interest in this German town of around 65,000 people that's no stranger to attention. Weimar first grabbed the spotlight in the 1700s during the reign of the arts-loving Duchess Anna Amalia, when such luminaries as Johann Wolfgang Goethe and Friedrich Schiller moved here, establishing it as a center of the German Enlightenment and building a reputation as Germany's intellectual capital. Franz Liszt,

Richard Wagner, and Friedrich Nietzsche passed through in the 19th century, an era easily imagined while strolling the cobbled streets. To enter the Bauhaus Museum is to fast-forward into the radical 1920s, when Weimar upended the worlds of politics, design, art, architecture, even typography—then receded into history as part of communist East Germany and bearing scars from the nearby Buchenwald concentration camp. Yet heritage runs deep, and Weimar still holds the promise of a place where thinkers can alter the world's cultural landscape from the rolling hills of central Germany. —JAYNE WISE

■ **TIP:** CHANNEL GOETHE OVER WINE AND BOILED BEEF AT THE ZUM WEISSEN SCHWAN RESTAURANT, NEXT TO THE POET'S HOUSE.

ATLAS

Weimar, Germany



Duchess Anna Amalia, whose namesake library went up in flames in 2004, founded Weimar's first fire insurance company in 1768.



Rocking the 21-stringed kora at Senegal's St.-Louis jazz fest

All Jazzed Up in West Africa

RIVERBOATS, WROUGHT IRON balconies, Creole culture, a famous jazz fest, and flamboyance in the face of hardship. Where else could this describe but...St.-Louis, Senegal? Founded in 1659 on an island in the River Senegal, this port town was once the capital of French West Africa. Then in 1902, France moved its regional base 350 miles south to Dakar, and St.-Louis eventually slipped into obscurity. Sometimes literally: Many of its colonial homes crumbled into the water. Recently, the city has begun to reemerge. The annual St.-Louis jazz festival (June 4-9) is the biggest of its kind in Africa, bringing 500 musicians to play in the central square of the historic quarter. After hours, revelers pack dimly lit cafés and bars off the square

for impromptu jam sessions. In 2000, UNESCO designated the island a World Heritage site, which encouraged Senegalese emigrants to join locals in the restoration and transformation of its pink and ochre row houses into hotels, inns, and galleries. A native Creole Métis businessman has resurrected the *Bou el Mogdad*, a river steamer from the 1950s that again offers dinner cruises with live jazz into Africa's interior. According to Marie-Caroline Camara, who turned a 19th-century timber warehouse into the chic Au Fil de Fleuve guesthouse: "American visitors say we're like New Orleans." —**DOUGLAS ROGERS**

■ **TIP: WATCH MANJAK WEAVERS AT WORK AND BUY CONTEMPORARY PRINTS AND OTHER LOCAL CRAFTS AT ATELIER TËSS.**

ATLAS

St.-Louis, Senegal



St.-Louis native Battling Siki was Africa's first world light heavyweight champ; his old home is today's Siki Hotel.

NAVIGATING THE GLOBE

SMART TRAVELER

“Lima is many cities in one, with an indigenous past, an old colonial heart, and turn-of-the-century quarters modeled on Paris.”

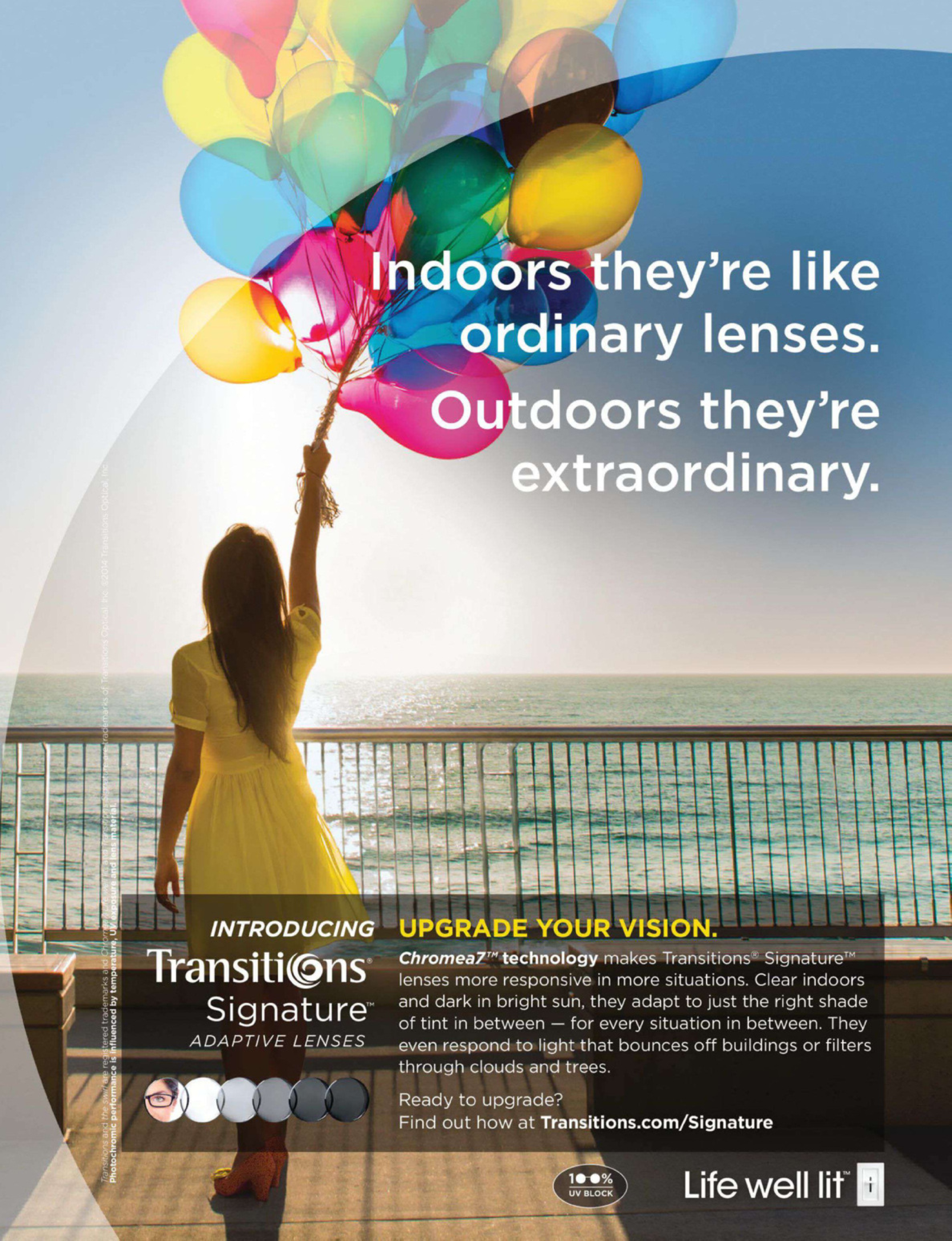
—JAMES HIGGINS

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A bartender makes a cocktail at Victoria Bar in the Barranco neighborhood of Lima, Peru.

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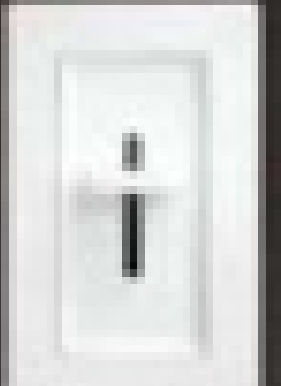
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Lima lights:
Central's take on
lamb cannelloni;
Victoria Bar
(right) and art
exhibits (below) in
Casona Cillóniz



MY CITY

The Quickening Pulse of Peru

IN LIMA, THE FOOD AND ART SCENES BEAT FAST AND FURIOUS By GARY LEE

LIMA IS IN full throttle. Lunch rolls seamlessly into dinner. Dancing keeps going long after last call. Across the more than a thousand-square-mile sprawl of Peru's capital, from the working-class Chorrillos barrio to highbrow San Isidro and along the glorious Pacific coastline, pure urban exhilaration reigns, and just about all of the 8.8 million inhabitants are caught up in it.

A decade-strong food boom, centered in the Miraflores neighborhood, fuels the city. Local foodies had barely begun drooling over Central chef Virgilio Martínez's sea bass with crab and noodles when Pedro Miguel Schiaffino started turning heads with his fried green bananas and other Amazon-inspired dishes at

Ámaz. I have watched many a casual restaurant meal turn into *Babette's Feast*. At Pescados Capitales, a couple tucking into lunch morphed gradually into a multigenerational gathering of two dozen, with platters of citrus-marinated sole,

tuna, and salmon, and mounds of langoustine-stuffed yellow potatoes, accompanied by glasses of pisco sour, Peru's liquid nirvana. And even before the cake made with lúcuma—an exotic Andean fruit—arrived, someone was on his cellphone, reserving a table for tomorrow's lunch at another of the famous sevicherias.

As the evening lengthens, the hunt shifts from food to the newest bar or band. And the stage changes, too, to Barranco. This



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The gold-hued government palace and the spired Lima Cathedral line Plaza Mayor.

oceanside hood's hot spot of the moment: Victoria Bar, with its signature cocktail Frida—*camu camu* juice and jalapeño-infused tequila, spicy and seductive. Young Peruvian writer Ezio Neyra and a couple of friends opened Victoria last year in Casona Cillóniz, a handsomely restored 1903 Barranco mansion. It captures Lima's vibe of the moment: a dynamic forging of traditional spaces and cutting-edge ideas. "It's as if Lima is in a state of permanent construction," Neyra tells me.

In the wee hours, El Círculo offers a range of live music acts, from *cumbia* to reggae and pop, in a cavernous space for dancing.

Nuevo Peruvian cuisine and after-hours clubs aside, this

■ GO TO INTELLIGENTTRAVEL.NATIONALGEOGRAPHIC.COM FOR "I HEART MY CITY" POSTS.

Spanish-founded city's long and rich history is what gives it character. The churches and *casonas* around the Plaza Mayor, gaudy with their baroque facades, evoke the days when Spanish viceroys held sway. I discover some surprising new detail every time I wander through the El Museo del Convento de San Francisco, with its catacombs lined with bones, a library with 25,000 historic tomes, and an elaborate Moorish-style cupola. The nearby National Afro-Peruvian Museum explores one of colonial Peru's lesser known chapters. The room I like best displays the *cajón* and other musical instruments, and explains why Afro-Peruvian musicians have had such a profound impact on Peruvian music.

The Pacific Coast, kissing the city's edge for miles, gives us all

respite. I often stroll along the cliffs. The breezy ocean views are half the appeal. The other half: green spaces along the way, such as Parque Maria Reiche, with its floral depiction of the Nasca lines, the ancient geoglyphs in the southern Peruvian desert.

Some Limeños surf right off the beach at Barranco or escape to Playa Pulpos or other beaches an hour or two south. But most just find a favorite oceanside perch, like the flower-filled Parque Domodossola, to watch the sun sink into the sea. It's a moment to savor. When darkness falls, this urban giant will rise with a jolt and start moving fast.

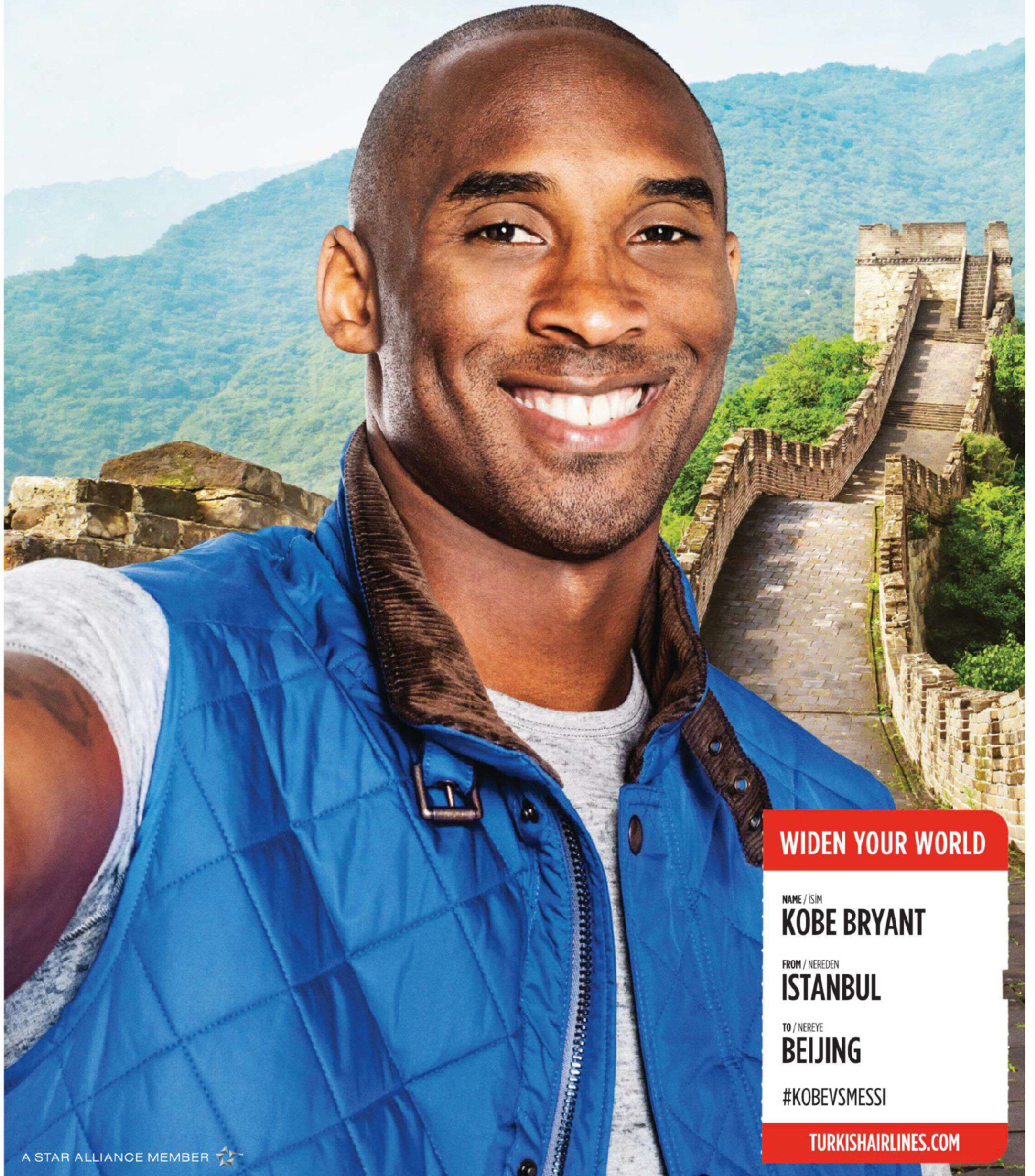
Former *Washington Post* Moscow bureau chief **GARY LEE** has a home and owns a hotel in Arequipa, Peru.

ATLAS

Lima, Peru



The same family has occupied Casa Solariega de Aliaga, near Plaza Mayor, since it was built in 1535.



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A parade through Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia

FAMILY TIME

Say, You Want a Revolution?

TRAVEL BACK IN TIME TO COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG By CYNTHIA HACINLI

PLACE	THE SCOOP	DON'T MISS
Colonial Houses	Sure, there are dozens of 18th-century buildings in Colonial Williamsburg, but it is in the homes of the early colonists that this prerevolutionary settlement comes alive.	Stay overnight in one of 26 historic homes. Sink into a canopy bed in the Orlando Jones House, where Martha Washington's grandfather lived.
Governor's Palace	Upper-class colonials liked to party. The King's birthday and Christmas holidays were excuses for the royal governor to throw a "rout" in the palace's Grand Ballroom. Fine linens and silver were used for guests.	Explore the dingy cellars with their original walls and 11 wine bins—the rest of the palace was rebuilt in 1934. Outdoors, play hide-and-seek in the boxwood maze in the tiered formal gardens.
Great Hopes Plantation	Smaller than the grand plantations of <i>Gone With the Wind</i> fame, this middling plantation is a reproduction of the sort of farm most of the rural middle class of colonial Virginia lived on.	Hoe a tobacco field, pick cotton, or trundle a loaded wheelbarrow to get a taste of 18th-century farming. Talk to African-American interpreters about what farm life was like for slaves.

ATLAS

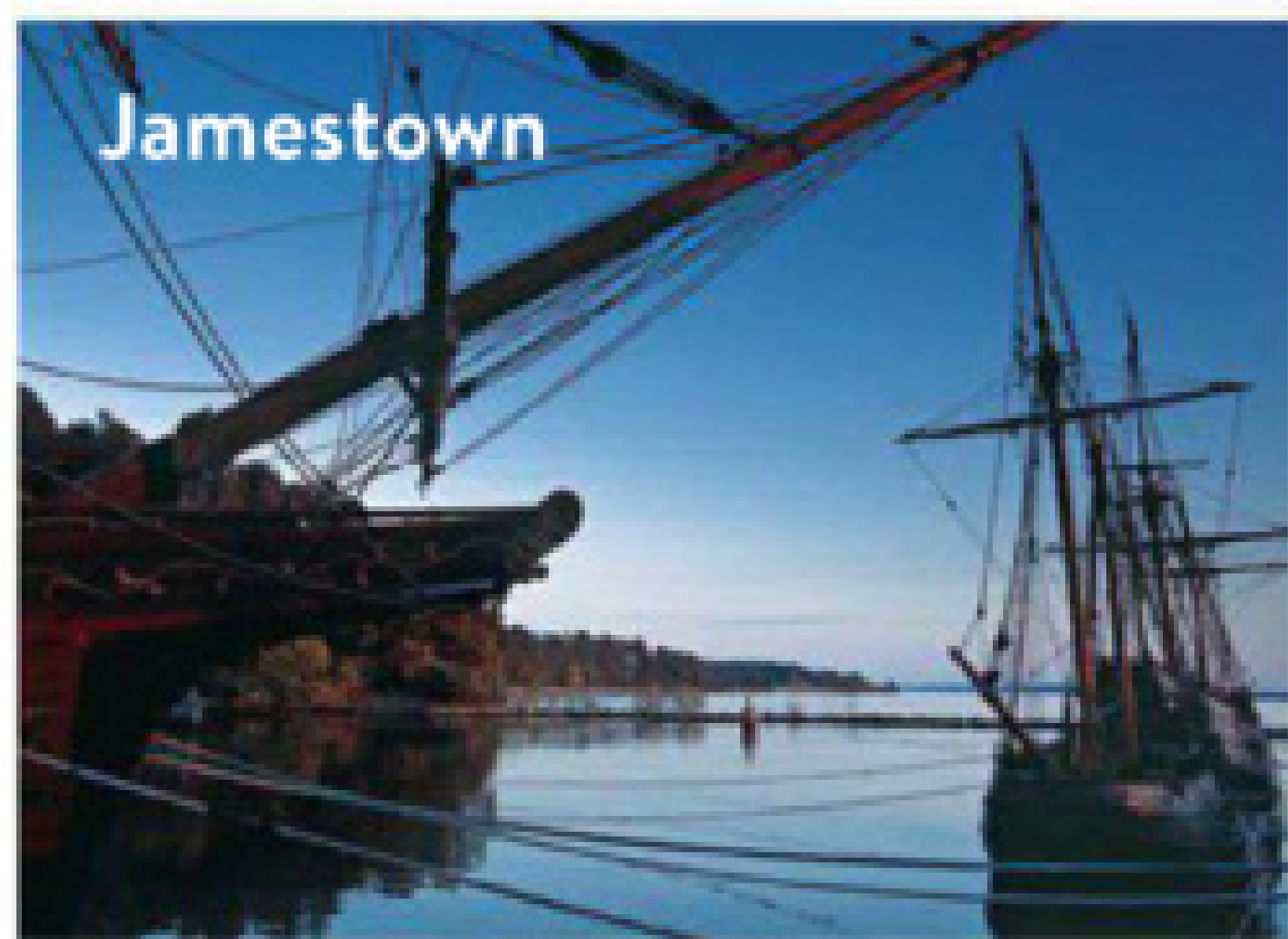
Williamsburg, Virginia



Captain John Smith produced a dictionary of over 500 Powhatan Indian words that included opossum, raccoon, persimmon, and Chesapeake.

JUST AROUND THE RIVER BEND

Tell your kids you're visiting where the real Pocahontas was married, and motor through ten miles of woodlands along Colonial Parkway from Williamsburg to Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in the Colonies, dating to 1607. After the buzz of Colonial Williamsburg, this quietly purposeful archaeological site on the James River seems Zen-like. Take a walking tour through active excavations, and peek in the bags used to keep track of findings like coins, beans, and pottery shards. Try on armor, play ring toss, and observe a matchlock musket being fired at



JAMESTOWN FORT. Or sort through the **DIG BOX**, a simulated archaeology dig with bones, seeds, and fish scales. Wrap up your visit with a stroll through the **ARCHAEAURIUM**, where the most recent find, the cannibalized skull of a 14-year-old colonial girl, is on display along with other artifacts including a 17th-century slate tablet with doodles and a 17th-century lead luggage tag emblazoned with the words "Yames Towne."

FIRST PERSON

"Time a trip to the brickyard right, and you may get a turn in the muddy treading pit, where clay and water are combined using bare feet."

—JAMES HORN, HISTORIAN

DAVID VALDEZ (DRUMMERS), PETER ESSICK/NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CREATIVE (SHIPS)

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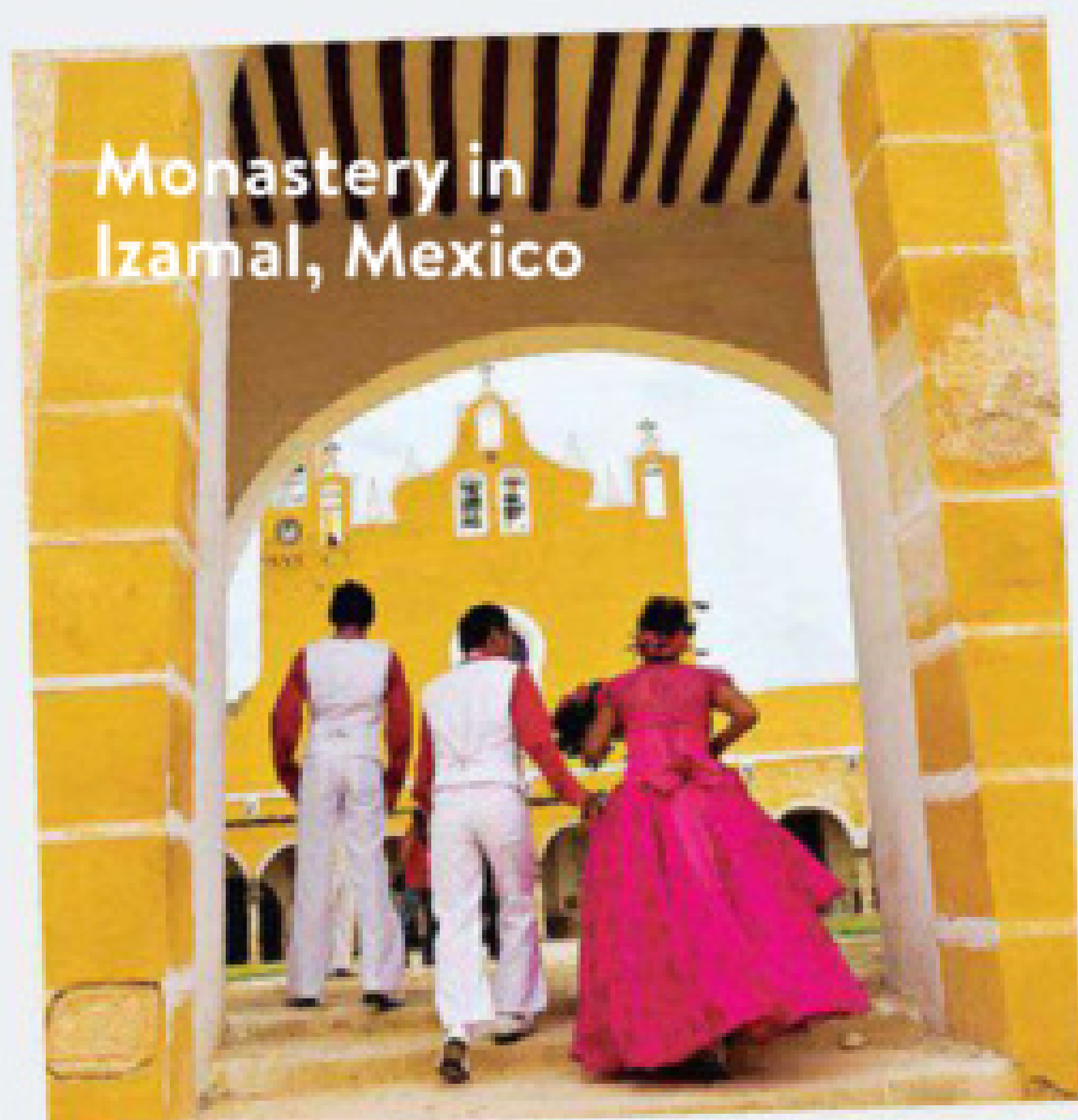
With seating for up to eight and increased storage behind the third row, Highlander has room for you and all your little monsters. Plus a few chickens, an ogre and a king prawn. toyota.com/highlander

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Let's
Go
Places

Monastery in Izamal, Mexico



DIGITAL NOMAD

GOOD AS GOLD IN YUCATÁN

By ANDREW EVANS

Like Mexican cooking, which mixes the flavors of limes and chilies, Yucatán's civilization is a blend of contrasting cultures: Maya and Catholic. Nowhere is the mix more evident than in the golden city of **IZAMAL**, in Yucatán's north. Buildings here wear the same sunny hue, matching that of the 16th-century monastery of St. Anthony of Padua (above), one of the oldest Catholic monasteries in the Americas.

Old is relative here, however. Three blocks to the north sits one of the highest pyramids in Yucatán, to the Maya sun god, built in the sixth century. Izamal was huge then, on par with Chichén Itzá, and merited monumental structures. Several remain, but Catholic missionaries repurposed others, recycling stone from Maya sites to build churches. If it weren't prohibited, one could scratch a church wall and find Maya stonework.

In the ocher light of dusk, Izamal shines like no other place. This was the Mexico I'd longed to see, where pagan gods sleep by Spanish churches and children clutching Spanish textbooks greet their parents in Maya. Now, though, a new religion prevails: soccer, played by men and boys with Maya blood in their veins.

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ADVENTURE 101

Going With the Flow in Idaho

RAFTING THE MIDDLE FORK OF THE SALMON RIVER By CRAI BOWER

"A RIVER CHANGES people, even if they're not looking to change," says Bill "Bronco" Bruchak. He should know, having guided on rivers since 1978, including 80 commercial trips down the Middle Fork of the Salmon River through the protected Frank Church–River of No Return Wilderness, in central Idaho. "White water makes you let go of all of the other worlds and take the time to be absorbed by pristine wilderness."

GETTING STARTED

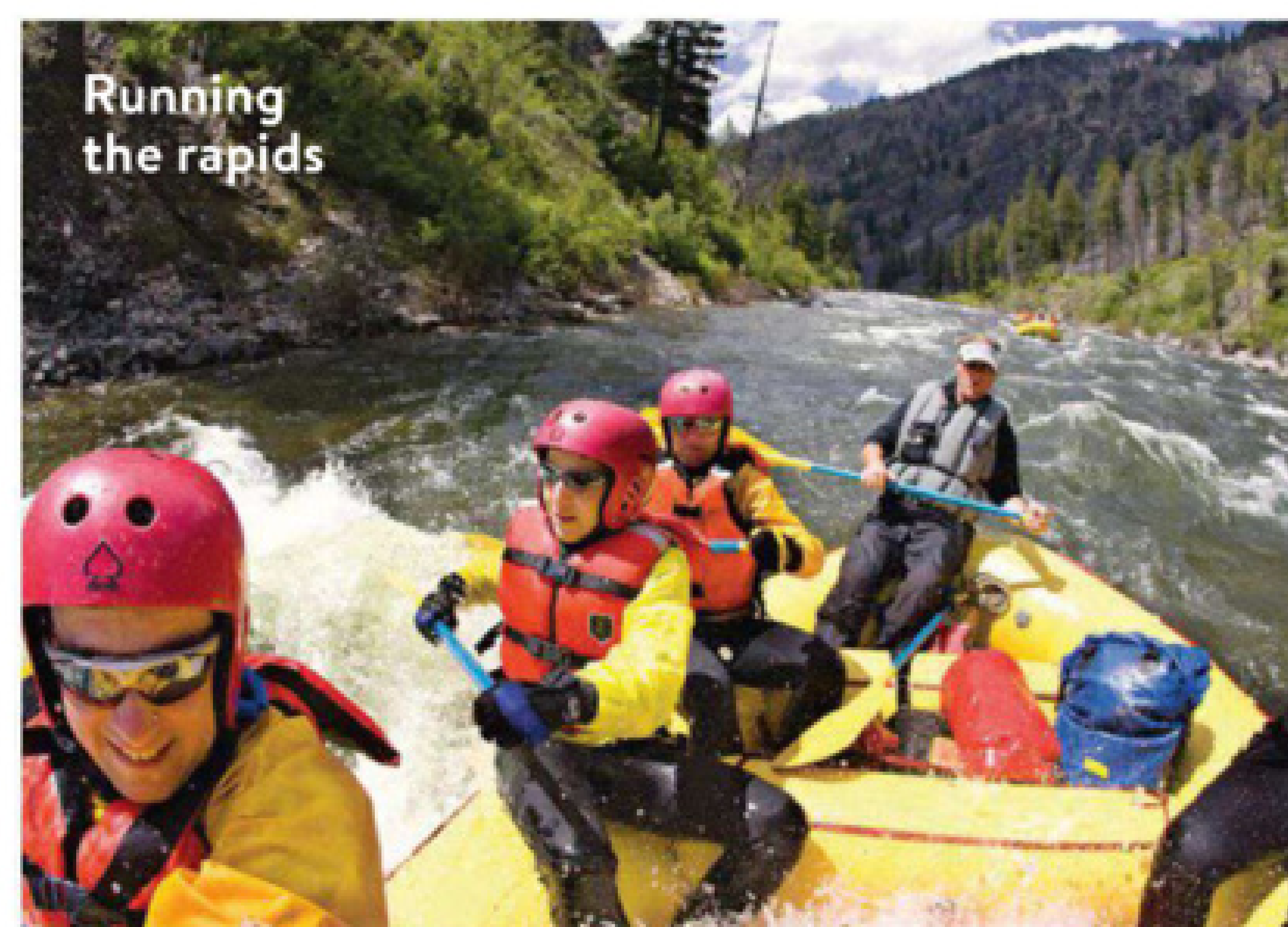
The Middle Fork is a free-flowing river that tumbles for a hundred miles of wilderness, promising plenty of frothy excitement from the headwaters an hour outside Stanley, Idaho, to the end when it rejoins the Salmon. A favorite with families and fit folks from 7 to 70 years old, the Middle Fork features a hundred Class 3 and 4 rapids in a stunning forested setting. Excursions average five hours on the river per day. Choose between single kayaks, rafts that hold up to eight people, or guide-powered rafts for two. Minimum age requirements change with the season (July is best for all abilities).

SELECTING AN OUTFITTER

Permits are strictly controlled on the Middle Fork, where roughly 26 outfitters run commercial multi-day trips from May through September. Check with the Middle Fork Outfitters Association (www.idahosmiddlefork.com) for a list of permitted operators and trip dates. Bruchak suggests researching your outfitter. "The best gauge is how long the guides have worked with an outfitter. Word of mouth also goes a long way in rafting, so ask where friends have paddled and with whom." Most people fly into Boise and either rent a car or fly (McCall Air) to Stanley, Idaho, where they attend an evening orientation and spend the night before departing for the river.

WEATHER AND GEAR

You will get wet, so pack in layers, i.e., the "Northwest wardrobe": Capilene, fleece, and rain gear (pants and jackets). "Temperatures can range from 32 to 100 degrees in a single day," says Bruchak, "so bring comfortable long-sleeved shirts and a brimmed



Running the rapids

hat." Outfitters provide tents, sleeping bags, camping pads, pillows, and waterproof duffel bags for cameras and other day-use items. Riverwear Sports in Stanley, Idaho, is a good source for things you forgot.

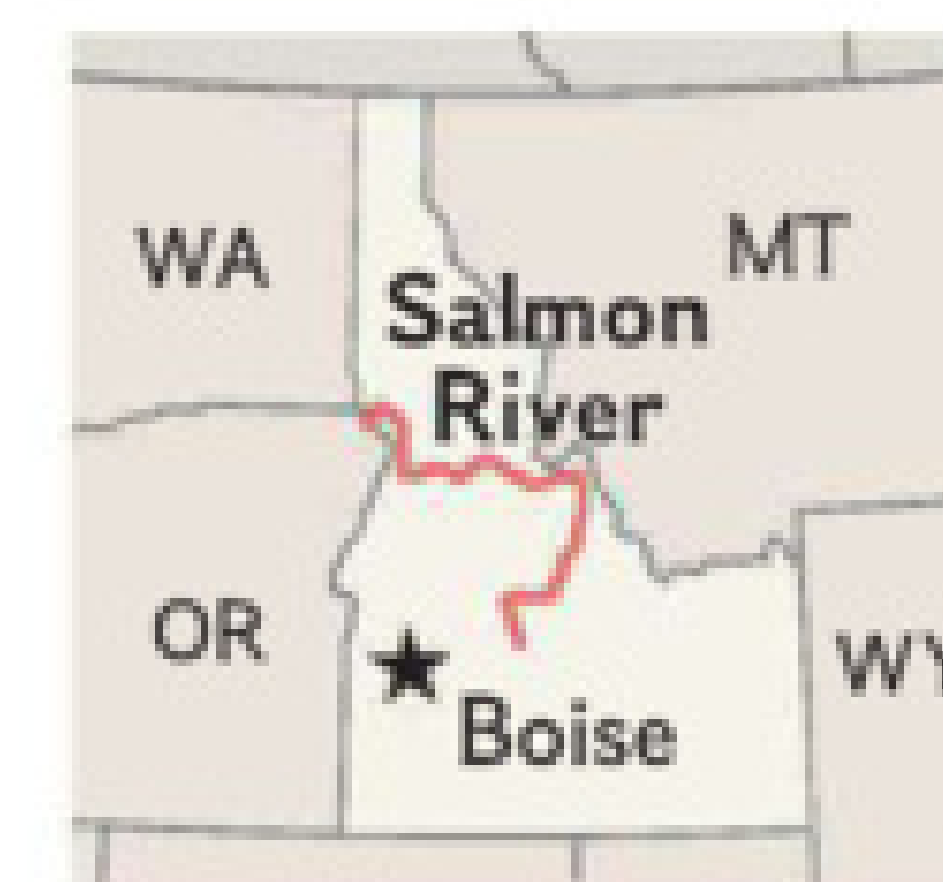
OFF THE WATER

In between paddling, groups make hikes into side canyons and climb up cliffs and pinnacles to discover pictographs, shrub-steppe flora in full bloom, and fauna, including bighorn sheep and the occasional rattler. "There's a story to learn or something incredible to see in every canyon," says Bruchak. Additionally, you can fish for trout, swim in clear pools, soak in natural hot springs, and dine on Dutch oven cuisine under a star-filled sky.



ATLAS

Salmon River, Idaho



In August 1805, Lewis and Clark tried to travel the Middle Fork of the Salmon (they called it Louis River) but turned back after declaring it too dangerous.

OTHER RIVERS

Colorado River, Grand Canyon: The granddaddy of them all, this 5- to 18-day trip by raft or dory covers up to 280 miles. **Tatshenshini River, Yukon, Canada:** The "Tat" float takes in the Yukon's big mountains, bigger grizzlies, and biggest white water.

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CHECKING IN

Inns of Belle Provence



Lavender blooms at the foot of Puimoisson village in southeastern France.

LES REMPARTS

Built into the massive ramparts of a famous wine village in the Côtes du Rhône region, this snug retreat centers on a courtyard where the trickle of water from a bathing pool softly echoes against stone walls. The five rooms include furnishings from exotic locales and views of the Rhône Valley, Mont Ventoux, and an undulating landscape where trails take guests past vineyards and olive groves.

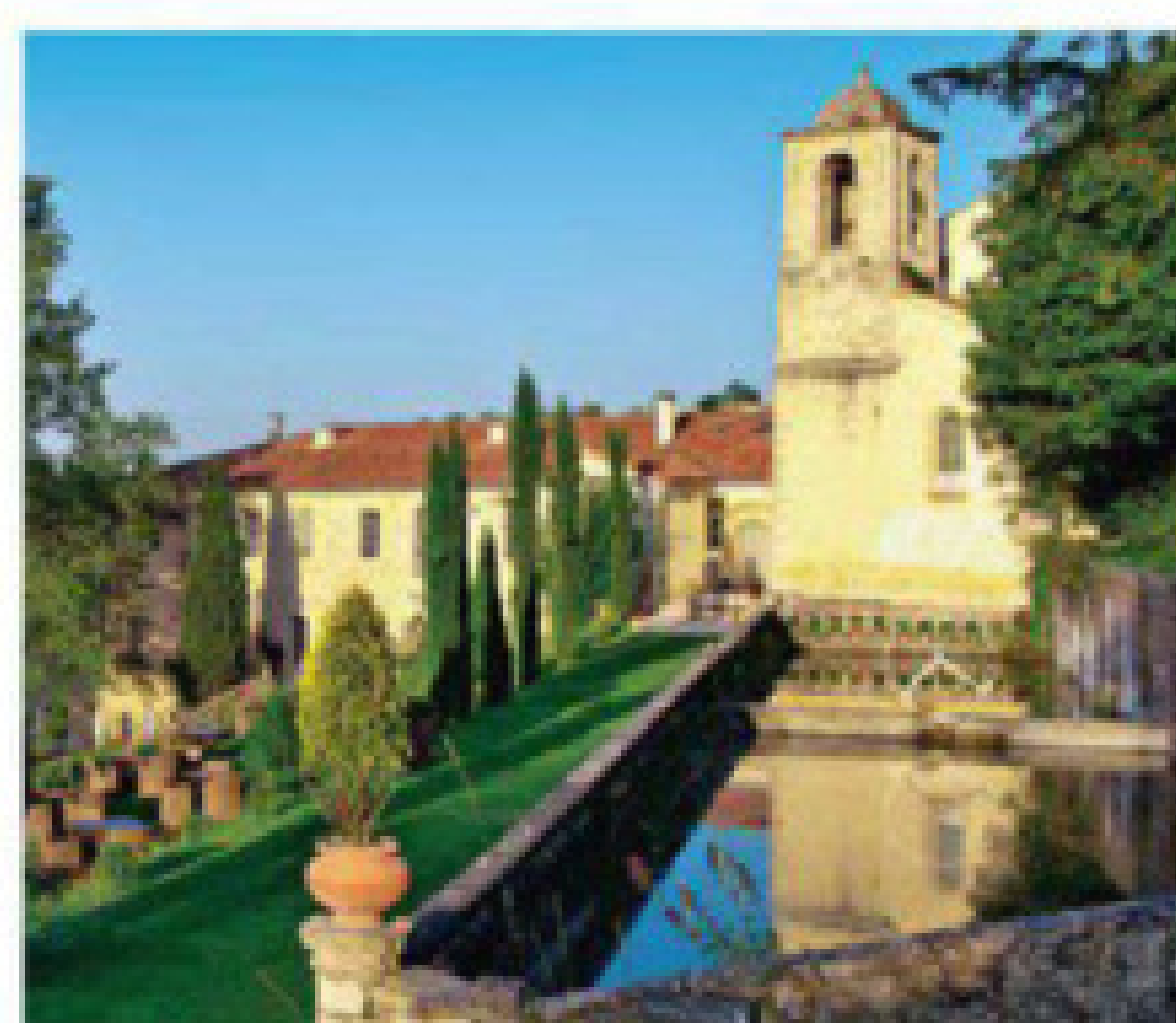
■ BEAUMES-DE-VENISE; FROM \$219, INCLUDING BREAKFAST



LE COUVENT DES MINIMES

Sun-kissed lavender and verbena perfume the gardens of this former 17th-century convent, situated in a village overlooking the fields and mountains of central Provence. Architectural elements of stone appear in the 46 light-filled rooms. After a day exploring the medieval lanes of nearby Forcalquier, the former capital of Haute-Provence, indulge in an essential oils massage at the spa run by L'Occitane.

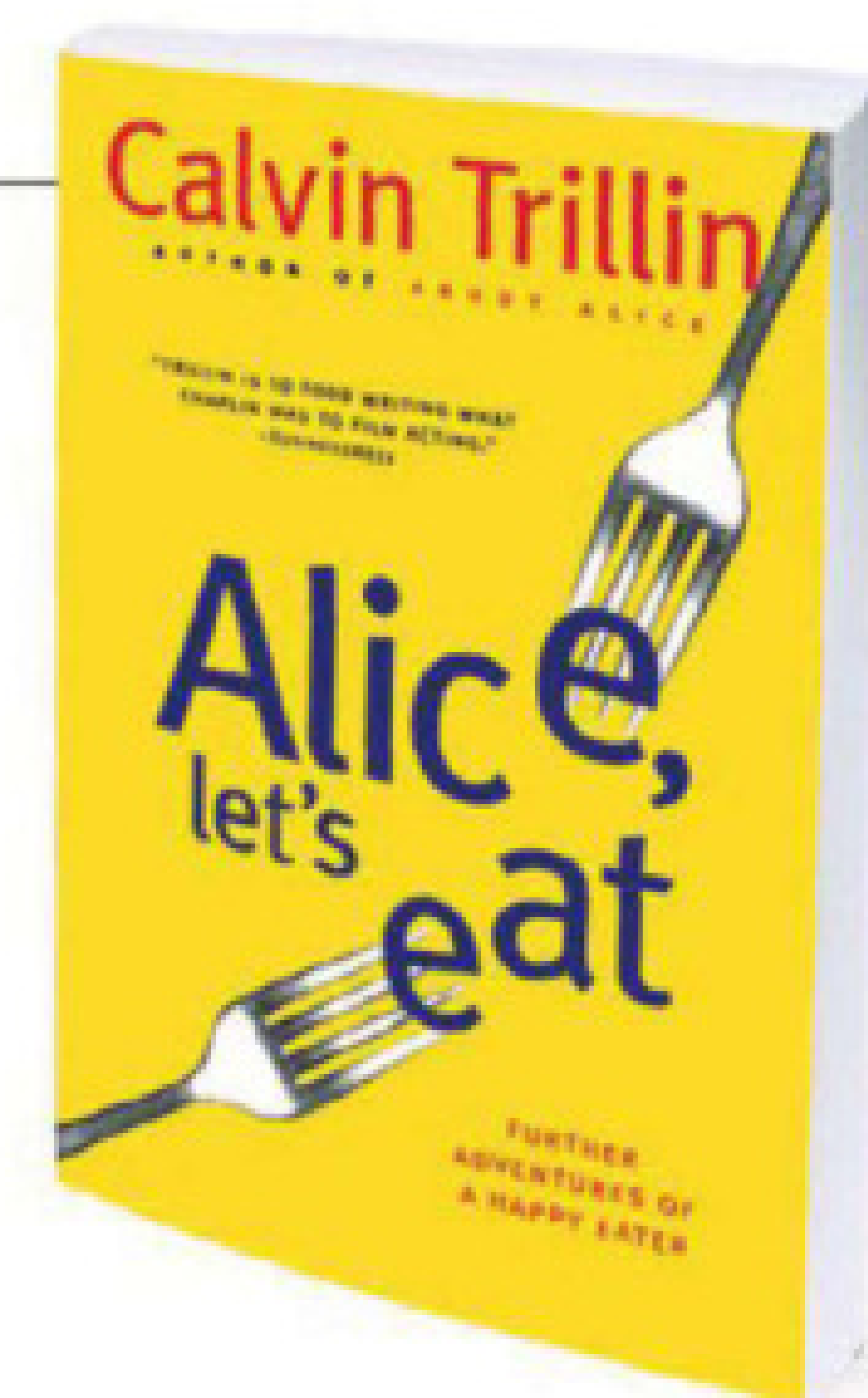
■ MANE; FROM \$275



LE MAS DE L'AMARINE

This welcoming five-room inn with restaurant lies on the leafy outskirts of an old Gallo-Roman town south of Avignon, where Vincent van Gogh painted "The Starry Night" and the produce and herbs of Provence spill from market stalls. At its heart is a bold mosaic floor created in the 1950s by French artist and sculptor Roger Bezombes when the stone farmhouse with terraced gardens was his home.

■ ST.-RÉMY-DE-PROVENCE; FROM \$260, INCLUDING BREAKFAST



BOOKSHELF

Forks in the road

Food and travel go together like, well, forks and knives. In **ALICE, LET'S EAT** (1978), Calvin Trillin tracks barbecue mutton to its global capital in Owensboro, Kentucky, riffs on jazz and jambalaya in New Orleans, and otherwise has us drooling across America and beyond.

Chinese-American journalist Jen Lin-Liu traces the heritage of the humble noodle from Beijing to Rome in her slurp-happy memoir **ON THE NOODLE ROAD** (2013).

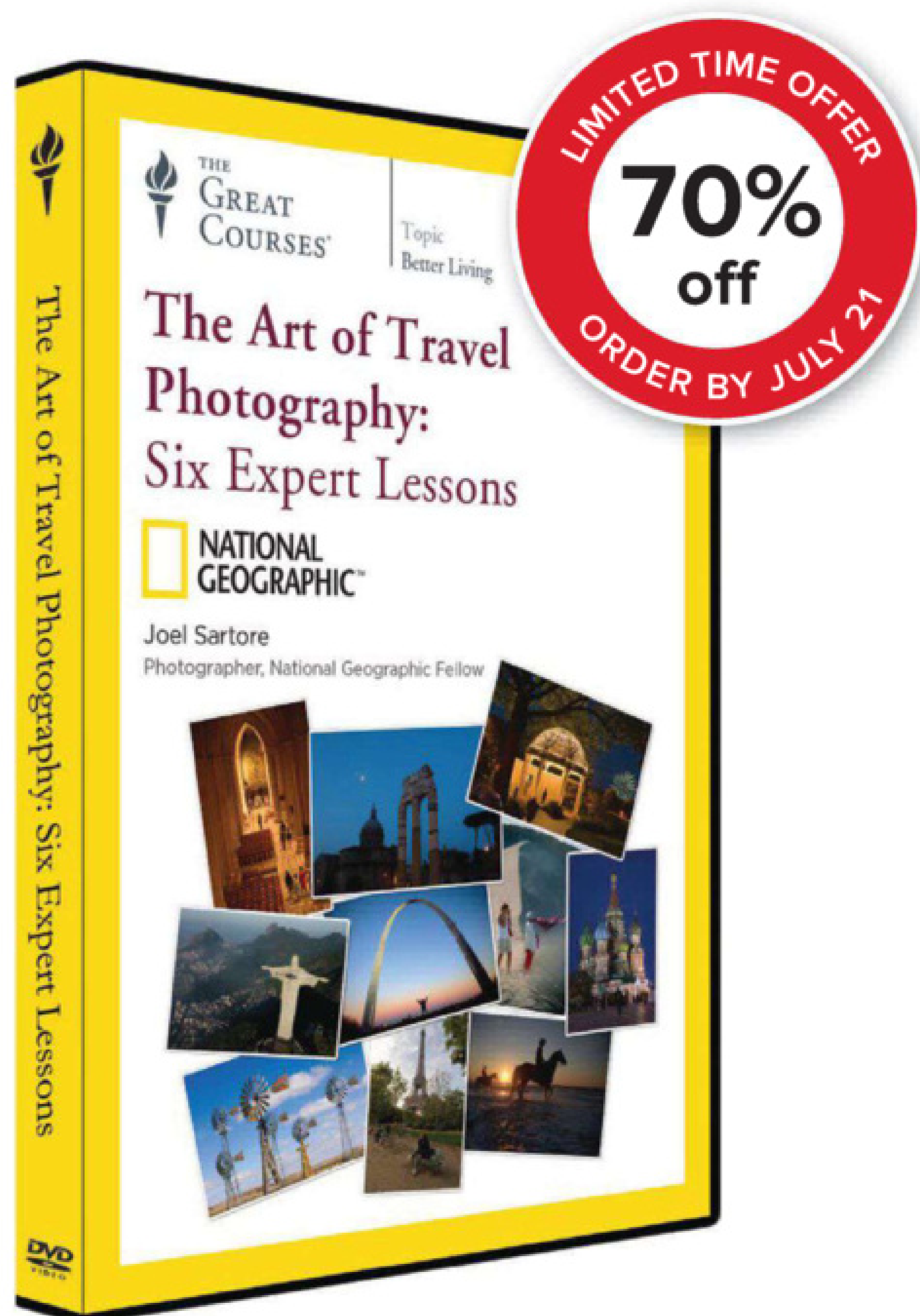
Sailor, scuba diver, and cook Ann Vanderhoof charts a savory course from the Dominican Republic to Trinidad in **THE SPICE NECKLACE** (2009). Each chapter includes recipes for Caribbean tastes such as mango chow and ginger spice cookies.

In **UNTANGLING MY CHOPSTICKS** (2003), Victoria Abbott Riccari immerses herself in Japanese food culture, including oyako donburi (chicken and egg over rice) in quick-stop subway shops and smoked salmon in venerable kaiseki tea ceremony salons.

Long before Peter Mayle popularized Provence, M. F. K. Fisher was celebrating the French table in works like **MAP OF ANOTHER TOWN** (1964). In **LONG AGO IN FRANCE** (1991), Fisher samples the delights of Dijon, including "great odorous bowls of écrevisses à la nage" (poached crayfish).

—Don George

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STRANGE PLANET

LEAPS OF FAITH At the El Colacho Festival in Castrillo de Murcia, Spain, men dress up as the devil and jump over rows of babies lying in the street to chase away bad luck. **GOT THE FEVER** White suits and platform shoes are back in style at new downtown Los Angeles nightclub Honeycut, where a lit-up disco dance floor encourages John Travolta moves. **ROVING SCRIBE** Born around 484 B.C. in present-day Turkey, the wandering scholar Herodotus has been called the world's first travel writer and, for his book on the Persian Wars, the father of history. **BEAUTY BOAT** British Columbia's Kootenay Lake Ferry is regarded as the world's longest free ferry ride. The 35-minute lake crossing is definitely one of the most scenic. **MUDDY MARVEL** The lowest point on Earth's surface, the Dead Sea offers salt-water soaks and mineral-rich mud baths said to relieve skin diseases and other ailments. **TINY BUBBLES** France's Champagne region claims three of the country's icons: the namesake sparkling wine, Joan of Arc, and Reims Cathedral, one of Europe's finest medieval churches. —Paul Martin



A slab of ribs and sides at Rendezvous

LOCAL FLAVOR

Where There's Smoke

THREE BONA FIDE BARBECUE JOINTS IN MEMPHIS By JOHN T. EDGE

SOUTHERN BARBECUE was originally cooked in earthen pits, mostly by African-American men, who stoked fires with hickory logs, swabbed whole hogs with vinegar, and tended them in a swirl of smoke for long hours. As 20th-century jobs shifted from farms to factories, those pit masters moved to cities like Memphis, Tennessee, where they worked more quickly, smoking smaller cuts like shoulders and ribs in handmade oil drum grills and brick barbecue pits.

In the process, says Lolis Elie, author of *Smokestack Lightning: Adventures in the Heart of Barbecue Country*, "the styles of barbecue now associated with Memphis emerged: shoulder sandwiches and rib racks."

Memphis boasts more than 75 barbecue restaurants. Some, like the **Rendezvous**—which popularized dry-rubbed ribs when Charlie Vergos began

grilling racks and shipping them across the nation via Federal Express—are more famous. But none are better or more culturally resonant than **Payne's Bar-B-Q**, a cinder block bunker doing business since 1972. Piled with roughly chopped pork, drenched in vinegary tomato sauce, capped with sweet-and-sour coleslaw, the overstuffed sandwiches that Flora Payne dishes are paragons of the urban barbecue art form. So are the spice-rubbed pork ribs, smoked on a charcoal pit that looks like a retrofitted aquarium, served across town at the mini-mart look-alike, **Cozy Corner**. At these beloved joints, lunch comes with a lesson in African-American enterprise. "We don't make a big fuss," says Desiree Robinson, widow of Cozy Corner founder Raymond Robinson. "We just work hard and smile big when our customers come walking in the door."

ATLAS

Memphis, Tennessee



Nearly 74 million American households have at least one grill, and the Fourth of July is the most popular day to stoke it up.



Oregon coastline

Saluting Innovators in Sustainable Tourism

4th Annual

THE LEADER IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AWARD

To honor excellence in travel marketing, *National Geographic Traveler* and the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International have once again teamed up to recognize and honor companies for their leadership and innovation in preserving and communicating an authentic sense of place—including the environment, culture, and historic integrity—through widely managed tourism campaigns.

Travel Oregon – Platinum Winner

Travel Oregon received the highest honor for its work implementing Oregon's *Rural Tourism Studio*, a robust training program designed to assist rural communities in sustainable tourism development.

Micato Safaris – Gold Winner

This inspiring safari outfitter helps to create sustainable change in Africa through education, by pairing children in need and safari travelers through its One for One Commitment.

Las Vegas Sands Corporation – Gold Winner

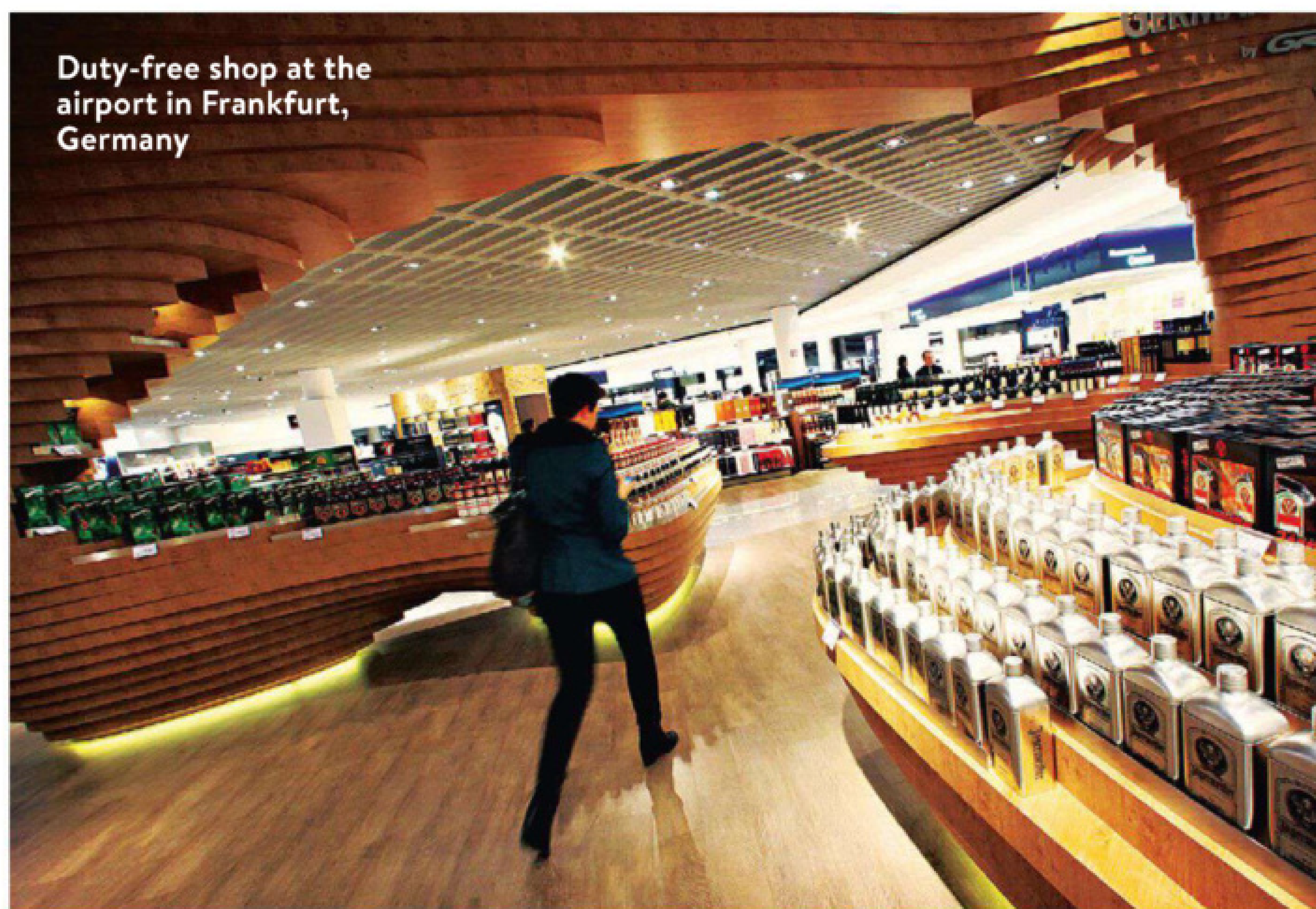
This leading hotel company strives to reduce the environmental impact of its operations, as well as enhance the guest experience and the quality of life in the communities where it operates.

Congratulations to this year's winners, who were presented at HSMIA's annual Adrian Awards at the New York Marriott Marquis on February 24, 2014.



Pictured from left to right: Fran Brasseux, Executive VP, HSMIA; Todd Davidson, CEO, Travel Oregon; Kristin Dahl, Director, Destination Development, Travel Oregon; Kim Connaghan, VP & Publisher, National Geographic Traveler





Duty-free shop at the airport in Frankfurt, Germany

PROBLEM SOLVED

A Duty-Free Dilemma

By CHRISTOPHER ELLIOTT

Q. Am I getting a good deal at duty-free stores at airports? Duty-free shops can theoretically mark down their products 15 to 50 percent and still turn a profit because the sale occurs outside national boundaries and therefore is not subject to local duties and taxation. But that doesn't mean you'll always find a bargain. "The savings can vary greatly," says Yngve Bia, president of the travel research firm Generation Research. Tobacco and liquor products usually are priced the most aggressively, and Bia says it's not uncommon to get half off the retail price. But better run a quick price check before you buy that bottle of Johnnie Walker whisky. Fire up your smartphone and see how much you'd pay for it at your discount liquor store back home.

Q. Do hotels really set aside the worst rooms for people who book through an online agency such as Priceline? Some frequent

NEED HELP?

Editor at Large Christopher Elliott is our consumer advocate and author of *How to Be the World's Smartest Traveler* (National Geographic Books).

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travelers believe so, and I've spoken with a few hotel employees who admit to saving their closet-size "Priceline rooms" for guests who book discount accommodations online. But it's not a widespread practice, and it violates the hotel's contract with booking sites. For example, Hotwire has a clause written into its agreement with its hotels that it may not set aside a certain room type for its customers. And Priceline spokesman Brian Ek notes that "hotels working with Priceline are contractually obligated to treat our customers as they would any other customers who don't qualify for special perks under a hotel's loyalty program." He says, "If that doesn't happen, and we hear about it, our team contacts the hotel. If there's a pattern, we may remove the hotel from our program." That's good news for bargain hunters who have a gripe about their quarters. Tell the manager your next call will be to the site you booked it through. You probably still won't get that upgrade, but you just might avoid the worst room in the hotel.

TRENDING

THE GREAT GREEN LOBSTER

By COSTAS CHRIST

Where I live on the coast of Maine, there are two rules: Never touch someone else's lobster trap, and always support the neighborhood lobsterman. In an overfished world—some 90 percent of bluefin tuna have been wiped out; ditto for many other seafood species—the Marine Stewardship Council has certified **MAINE LOBSTER** as among only 10 percent of fisheries worldwide that are sustainable. Generations of "lobsta" families form the backbone of villages dotting the rugged coast, where they haul traps in the cold Atlantic waters. Maine's marine conservation ethic has also inspired today's younger generation to keep the lobstering tradition alive, helping to stem the tide of rural to urban migration that has threatened the survival of many small communities in New England. One example: Nick Saunders, who last year graduated from college with a business degree and decided to become a lobsterman and launch a "sea to table" delivery service (www.catchofthedaymaine.com). If, like me, you enjoy going out for a good meal with family and friends while being gentle on the planet, then go right ahead, order the Maine lobster.



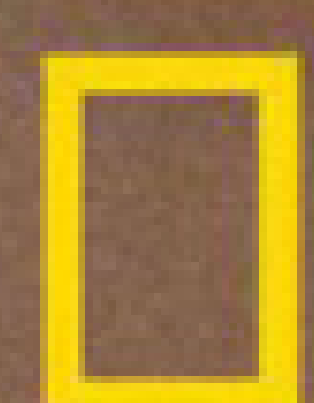
Maine lobster bake

FREDRIK VON ERICHSEN/DPA/CORBIS (SHOP), ROBERT F. BUKATY/AP IMAGES (LOBSTER)



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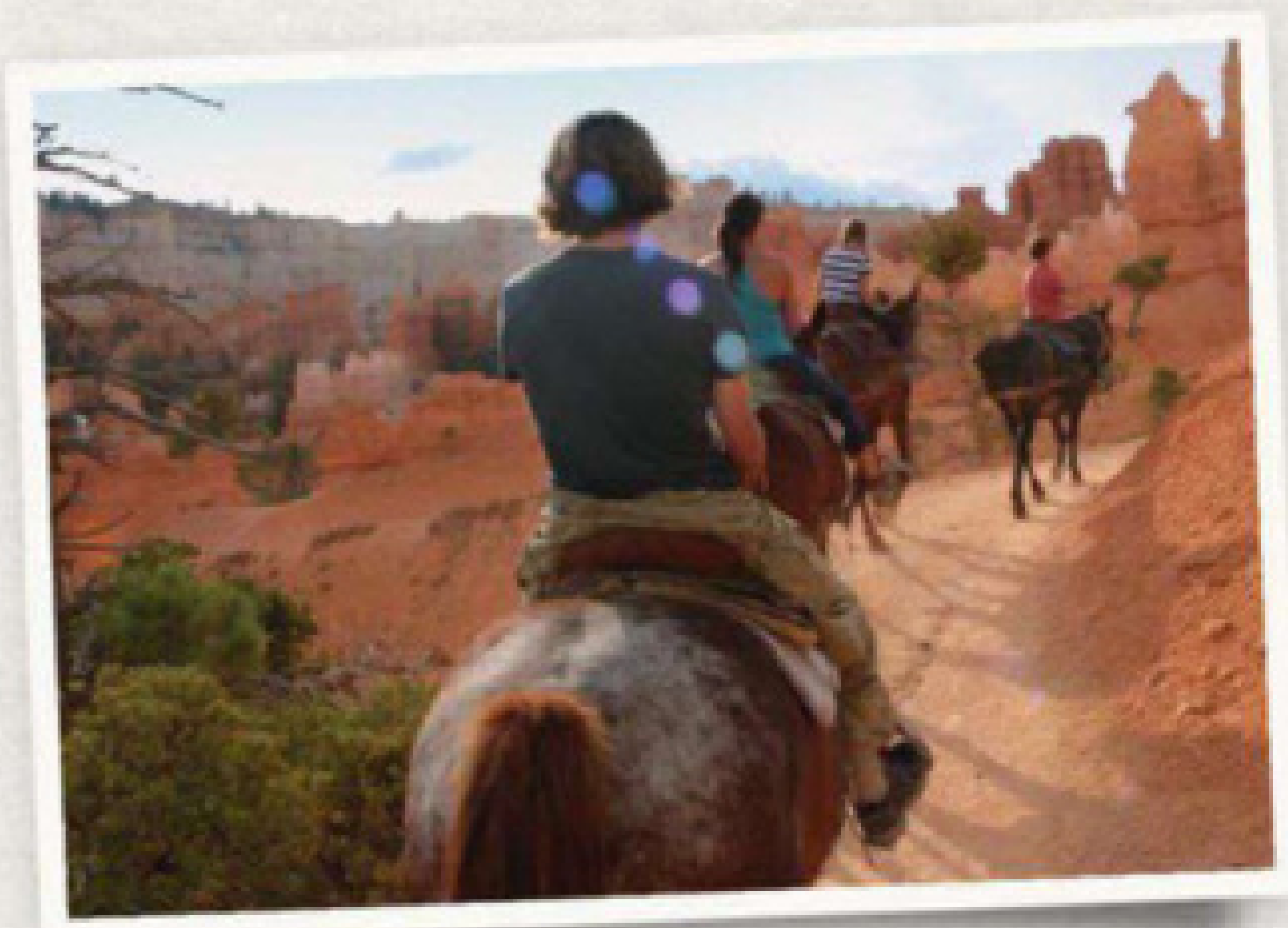
DAY 1 | Zion

HIKE THE NARROWS Enjoy one of the world's best canyon hikes up the shallow Virgin River. Redrock canyon walls reach into the sky above as you splash and stroll through the river's cool waters.

DAY 2 | Zion to Bryce Canyon

WALK TO EMERALD POOLS Stroll easily to lush waterfalls, which cascade down towering redrock formations with a colorful splash.

DRIVE THE SCENIC LOOP Hit the road along the Mt. Carmel Scenic Byway (Hwy 89) to Bryce Canyon, then stay in the car a little longer for the 38-mile scenic loop, which is especially brilliant in the hours around sunrise or sunset.



DAY 3 | Bryce Canyon to Capitol Reef

RIDE BENEATH THE HOODOOS Saddle up for a guided mule ride to the floor of Bryce Canyon, passing beneath the otherworldly rock formations called "hoodoos" along the way.

WATCH A SUNSET LIKE NO OTHER After winding along one of America's "Top 10 Scenic Roads" (Hwy 12), start your Capitol Reef explorations by watching the sky turn from coral to violet at Sunset Point.

DAY 4 | Explore Capitol Reef

BIKE THE HISTORIC BURR TRAIL Rent mountain bikes to cover some ground as you roll past ancient petroglyphs, historic orchards and dramatic slot canyons on this famous trail.

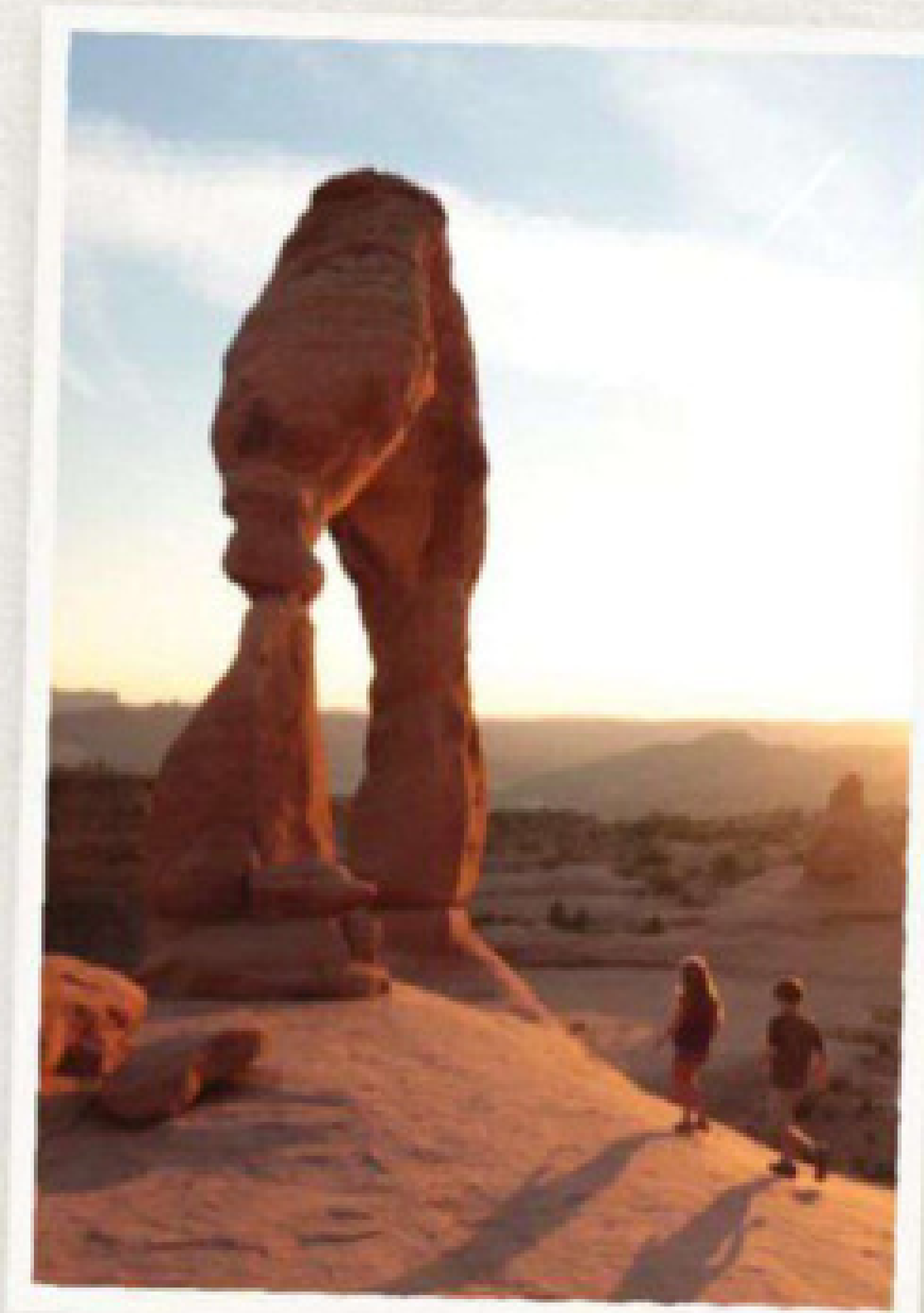
DAY 5 | Capitol Reef to Arches

TOUR THE FIERY FURNACE After a two-hour drive along the Capitol Reef Country Scenic Byway (Hwy 24), stretch your legs in Arches with a tour through this twisting labyrinth of brilliant redrock fissures and spines so intricate it would be impossible to find your way without a guide.

HIKE TO DELICATE ARCH Still got some energy? This 1.5-mile hike is beautiful, but the final view of Utah's famous landmark is what truly confirms its standing on the bucket lists of adventurers everywhere.

DAY 6/7 | Canyonlands

RAFT CATARACT CANYON Arches and Canyonlands are contiguous, so it's easy to book a guided two-day trip down this legendary section of the Colorado River. You'll cascade through dozens of whitewater rapids on the splashiest roller-coaster ride of your life.



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Over There

A HUNDRED YEARS AFTER THE START OF WORLD WAR I,
THE YANKS ARE COMING AGAIN. IN NORTHEASTERN FRANCE,
TWO HISTORY BUFFS FIND FLAGS, FIELDS,
AND FRENCH-BELGIAN BEER

Remembering
WWI sacrifice, a
French military
band marches
at the Meuse-
Argonne American
Cemetery. Nearby,
village ruins
(opposite) are
remnants of war in
bucolic Lorraine.



A

T THE MARBLE CROSS, he kneels. Taking a wet sponge from the bucket, he passes it over the chiseled name of the fallen soldier like a mother washing her baby's face. Then, he rubs fine sand into the indentations so the name pops for the photo, dusts off the excess with a soft cloth, and takes a beribboned wreath from the tractor bed piled high with Memorial Day flowers.

"I did my first Memorial Day in 1967, when I was six years old," Nicolas Raffa tells me, in French, carefully adjusting the small French and American flags fluttering in the breeze before the cross. "The village school is just over there," he says. He gestures past 14,246 white headstones—the largest American cemetery in Europe. "Our teacher taught us a song, and we put flowers on the graves." Inhaling the lilac-scented air, I'm finding it hard to reconcile that this emerald strip of France's Lorraine region once roiled with battles along World War I's infamous western front.

Today, Raffa is mayor of his village, Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, site of the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery and Memorial. He knows well the stories of the young doughboys killed here during a major American-led offensive in the fall of 1918. Under two hours from Paris by high-speed train, this forested region of country villages stitched together by the placid Meuse River is one of the most deeply *gaulois*—or "French to the core"—areas I've discovered over the past quarter century of living and traveling in France.

Here at the cemetery, though, the headstones read like a recipe from the 19th-century American melting pot. There's Cashmir Poposh, from Michigan; Vito Accardi, from New York; Freddie Stowers, from South Carolina, the only WWI





Girl Scouts living in Germany plant flags at the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery. Soldiers' personal effects (opposite) fill the private Romagne '14-'18 Museum.

African-American Medal of Honor recipient; and Frank Luke, Jr., the legendary ace pilot from Arizona.

“Frank Luke was crazy,” Raffa tells me, as though he’s talking about his brother. “He would do anything to bring down a German target.” Luke probably wasn’t the only hothead. I learn most American soldiers had never left their farm fields or hometowns before they were shipped off to Europe, bringing our nation’s adolescent energy to the effort to end the Great War sparked in 1914.

I thought my brother, Chris, was crazy, too, when he told me he’d enlisted in the Army. I was off to my junior year of college in Paris, where I would meet the Frenchman who would become my husband. A resolute pacifist with all the certainty of youth, I couldn’t figure out why my brother would join an organization whose mission ultimately was to fight. It was 1984. Who was there to fight against? Unfortunately, Chris would find out 17 years later, in Afghanistan. It would take me longer, though, to learn this simple truth: that pacifist and patriot are not mutually exclusive, that you can hate war but respect and appreciate why we must fight in our imperfect world. Maybe as a peace offering to my “little” brother—now six feet four and a colonel—I’ve invited him to join me on a Memorial Day trip to this bucolic French borderland where Americans are welcomed warmly in honor of their soldiers’ remembered sacrifice.

Returning to his task, Raffa places the wreath in front of the cross, then takes a sheet of paper he’s prepared from a pile and leans it against the flowers. Stepping back, he snaps a digital photo of the tableau, which he’ll later e-mail to the American back home who sponsors this grave every Memorial Day through an online program.

On the paper, the sponsor’s epithet for the soldier reads: “Edwin L. Moore. Duty to country but love of baseball.”

FROM THE OBSERVATION DECK atop the towering Montfaucon American Monument, the plains look almost Tuscan. Fields of golden canola flowers gleam against patches of smoky green trees. The wind whips around us.

“I can’t believe that little stream stopped them,” Chris marvels, spotting the Meuse River valley in the distance. By “them” I know he means the German kaiser’s army. “Over there, you can almost see Verdun,” he says, pointing southeast.

Where I see gentle Tuscany-like fields, Chris sees the battles fought by the American Expeditionary Forces here almost a century ago.

After winding back down the 234 steps, I stop to peruse the visitors book, filled with words in French, English, German, and Dutch. One French writer pens: “Superb view. Thinking of those soldiers from the land of Uncle Sam, dead for this French countryside and for a special idea of liberty. Thank you.” And another, scrawled in a childlike script, also in French: “Cool! But please install an elevator.”

Though Chris and I are both fervent history buffs, and there’s a monument in almost every village, we’ve vowed not to get “warred out” (my brother’s words). The perfect antidote: the European Beer Museum, in nearby Stenay, a fortified burg

along the Meuse River with an arcaded village square humming with pedestrians.

At the museum entrance, a sign reads: “known as the biggest beer museum in the world.” That sounds more like a brash American claim than a French one, but we’re willing to give it the benefit of the doubt—especially when we learn there once were more than 200 breweries and malting outfits in the Lorraine region. When you’re on the Belgian border, as we are here, wine takes a backseat.

The English-friendly museum artfully displays some 50,000 vintage bottles, glasses, posters, copper stills, and what have you. I try to take in the information about beer history and brewing techniques, but frankly my mind is already at the on-site tavern. That’s where Chris and I find ourselves in short order, tasting Lorraine craft beers with one of the museum’s founders, René Dupuit, an energetic retiree who emerged from behind the wooden bar when he heard my confusion over the 70 beers on the menu.

“First try the Charmoy,” Dupuit suggested, indicating the

WHERE I SEE GENTLE TUSCANY-LIKE
FIELDS, MY BROTHER, CHRIS, SEES
THE BATTLES FOUGHT BY THE
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES
HERE ALMOST A CENTURY AGO.

palest of the four local beers he’d selected for us, sparkling in chalice-like goblets. “It’s made by a young man who studied at the Orval Abbey Brewery in Belgium.”

Next we sip a triple-fermented, honey-hued brew from the Ardennes Forest. Finally, a ruddy “classic red” made in Pont-à-Mousson and the amber Stenay, brewed in town. We escape just in time for an afternoon nap.

ONE NEEDS TO BE RESTED to face the battlefields outside Verdun, as we did the next day. Many French families, including my husband’s, were touched by the epic, 300-day battle of attrition over this narrow corridor of land in 1916, well before the Americans arrived. Humanity was completely erased, churned and plowed into a lunar landscape of enormous craters choked with tangles of barbed wire and metal pickets by some 60 million shells that rained down from German artillery hidden in the forest. “People find things in the forest often, even now,” guide Ingrid Ferrand tells us, as we leave the battlefield visitors center and head up the slender road slicing through the dense woods around Fort Douaumont, the massive centerpiece of France’s Verdun defense line. “Four hundred thousand French soldiers perished around here,” she said. “After the war, locals would scour the terrain after Sunday Mass and bring bones by the cartload to the ossuary up the way.”

We walk along a network of footpaths through a forest of oak, ash, and beech trees planted after the war. The fertile land undulates with water-filled bomb craters, like wading pools under glistening green leaves. Cement markers evoke the past:



A couple enjoy breakfast alfresco at Château des Monthairons. Now a hotel, the mansion served as a WWI hospital.



U.S. Army Col. Christopher Miller surveys the ruins of Montfaucon-d'Argonne. Beer is the drink of choice at Brasserie de Charmoy (above).

bakery, farm, Main Street. My brother's voice cuts through the trilling of birds. "Ceil, check this out!" Coming up beside him, I see it, too. A long, browned, human bone carefully placed on a "farm" marker. "I wouldn't want to be here alone at night," Chris says, as we head for Fort Douaumont, at the crest of the ridge.

At the fort we pick our way up to the massive roof, keeping an eye out for metal spikes and rebar exposed by the shelling a century ago. "In the States, this would be all fenced off," Chris comments, loping across the grass-covered craters on top of the fort, past turrets and observation posts. I watch as he disappears down the other side to explore "machine gun alley."

I head for the main entrance where, before venturing down into the clammy passageways, I meet a group of American kids on a field trip from Faith Baptist School near Ramstein U.S. Air Base in Germany. Their teacher, Virginia Horak, remarks on the similarities between our Civil War soldiers and France's in WWI. "Even the uniforms were the same colors, gray and blue," she says. "In many ways, Verdun was France's Gettysburg."

Later, at the ossuary, Chris asks me to take a photo of him beside a helmeted marble bust commemorating the French infantrymen of Verdun. I translate the memorial inscription for him: Struggle, suffer, die.

"That about sums it up," he says, somberly.

ONCE A HUB of the region, Verdun is a sleepy town today, full of contrasts. We fold ourselves into a tiny tourist train that takes us into the belly of Verdun's Citadel (two miles of underground passages, some brought to life with sound, light, holograms, and eerie wax statues), where Chris exclaims, "This is Disneyland for war freaks." An hour later we are buying sweet souvenirs at the family-owned candy company Braquier, founded in 1783, which supplies sugared almonds coated in 24-karat gold to the United Arab Emirates royal family and piñata-like chocolate "bombs" with real fuses for local weddings and special occasions.

At L'Estaminet—Verdun's friendly town pub and microbrewery, with a dozen beers on tap and enough vintage memorabilia to rival the Stenay beer museum—we run into an exuberant group of former American marines. They tell us they're "traveling fast, keeping ahead of the gendarmes," on their own Memorial Day pilgrimage.

They'd all served in Vietnam and were a thoughtful, erudite bunch beneath their bravura, like most military officers I've met through Chris over the years.

Traveling the back roads of the pastoral countryside southeast of Verdun the next day, searching for memorials, takes us to Hattonchâtel: a few narrow streets with ivy-draped walls and a hulking castle on a ridge. The village lay in ruins after the Great War until an American from Massachusetts, Belle Skinner, learned of Hattonchâtel's fate.

"Meess Skinner," as she's still known in the village, purchased the medieval castle where the Germans' commander had lived, restored it from 1923 to 1928, and, for good measure, founded a dispensary, raised money to rebuild the church steeple, and brought running water to the village. Today, the castle is a chic boutique hotel with cows grazing in the

surrounding yard. Down Rue Miss Skinner, a whimsical café called L'Air du Moulin peeps out from behind flowering vines.

The church bell (also sponsored by Skinner, to replace the one stolen by the Germans for its bronze) clangs noon as we look over the valley below. "Half a million Allied troops flowed through down there, with 220,000 Germans up here shooting at them," Chris says. "They must've kicked up a lot of dust."

From ruins to bounty: As we linger over lunch at Au Rendez Vous de Saint Benoît, a garden-to-table former truck stop at a countryside intersection outside Hattonchâtel, co-owner Elizabeth Gillet offers to show us her thriving gooseberry bushes. "This region inspires us," Gillet says. "Almost anything is available nearby. You've got forests, lakes, and all that nature gives us. It's a real land of milk and honey."

EATING IS THE LAST THING on our minds the next day. We're walking in the barbed-wired trenches near the Meuse Valley village of St.-Mihiel, 22 miles south of Verdun, muddy shoes slipping on decomposing leaves, when our guide, Florence Lamousse, turns to Chris.

"Excuse me for asking, but have you been to war?" she says.

"Yes," Chris replies, "I've been in Iraq and in the trenches in

"THIS REGION INSPIRES US. ALMOST ANYTHING IS AVAILABLE NEARBY. YOU'VE GOT FORESTS, LAKES, AND ALL THAT NATURE GIVES US. IT'S A REAL LAND OF MILK AND HONEY."

Afghanistan, dug by the Soviets when they were fighting the mujahideen."

"So you know," Lamousse says. "Because so many people who come here say, 'Thank heavens there is no more war!' and I have to say, 'We still have war!' People just don't realize it." She shakes her head sadly.

MEMORIAL DAY DAWNS, leaden and blustery. Woodsmoke hangs in the air as we leave our bed-and-breakfast, the Villa Nantrisé, a doily-free establishment in Romagne-sous-Montfaucon owned by a Dutch couple, where I would have happily nestled in for a week of pampering.

Simple homes with beige stucco facades and periwinkle, purple, and red window shutters line the main street of the American cemetery's "hometown." Stopping to warm up at Chez Jean-Paul, the village café and informal tourist headquarters next to the church, we browse the intricately worked trench art for sale—vases, ashtrays, and cups made from polished artillery shell remnants. The sprightly owner, Jean-Paul de Vries, tells us he's collected much more over the years in the nearby Ardennes Forest. He lets us peek inside his Romagne '14-'18 Museum, an Ali Baba's cavern of war memorabilia illustrating daily life in the trenches (camp beds, pistols, uniforms, journals), located off the café's main room. But we can't linger.

The ceremony begins promptly at 11 a.m., with a drumroll.



At St.-Mihiel, guide Florence Lamousse gives tours of reconstructed WWI trenches, where the main danger now is wild boar.

The crowd snaps to attention. If you have a uniform, it seems, you're welcome. The French Army, in pale blue pillbox hats and khaki, marches beside their WWI reenactors: French *poilus*—or brave bearded ones—in vintage costume. The local fire department is here, in bright orange helmets. Members of the U.S. Air Force, from the base in Ramstein, Germany, look sharp in dark blue, while their Girl Scout daughters wearing their brown or green vests wave from the audience.

I place my hand over my heart as the first notes of the U.S. national anthem roll out. I've never felt prouder of my country—and closer to my brother—than here, in the rain, choking up to the strains of "The Star-Spangled Banner" played by a military band from an American Air Force base in Germany at a WWI cemetery in France.

There's Mayor Nicolas Raffa in front of the marble chapel, surrounded by French and American dignitaries. Above them, inscribed on the doorframe: "In sacred sleep they rest."

I glance at Chris. His profile is stony, his eyes riveted on the American flag slowly rising up the pole.

Later, he confesses that since 2001, when he saw his comrades die in Afghanistan, he's dreaded Memorial Day. I had no idea he'd lost men in battle, and I'm ashamed that I never asked. But this commemoration, this pilgrimage, Chris tells me, has

helped him face that tragic loss and fully honor the memory of his fellow soldiers, "those who gave all for our nation," just as their forebears did here, a century ago.

Because this is France, every event, even the most solemn, is grounds for a champagne reception. After the speeches, the flag raising, and the wreath laying, we parade behind the French military band through the cemetery, into the village, and back along the main street, festooned with French and American flags. The rain has stopped. It seems the whole town has turned out. Pausing at the town hall, the band begins to play.

I notice a platinum-haired woman leaning out of her ground-floor window, nodding her head to the theme song from *A Bridge Too Far*. When the musicians move on toward the reception, I stop to chat with her. "We won't forget!" Marianne Fisch tells me, after I introduce myself.

"I love this fanfare; it brings back memories," she says. "And I'm happy the French and Americans are still friends at heart. Politics go up and down, you know, but our bond is eternal."

This is **CEIL MILLER BOUCHET**'s first feature for *Traveler*. She is currently writing a memoir titled *The Bordeaux Diaries*. Based in New Orleans, photographer **KRIS DAVIDSON** has long had a fondness for French fare and joie de vivre.

THE INSIDER

Lorraine, France

YOU'LL NEED A CAR to fully explore Lorraine's rural WWI sites. Americans can expect a warm welcome, since most locals who live along the western front today still feel a deep gratitude to the U.S. soldiers who fought and died here.

WWI CENTENARY

Special events commemorating the Great War are planned throughout France this year and next, including the 2014 Tour de France route (July 5-27), which will run through many frontline cities, including Verdun. The Centenary Mission website is the online

clearinghouse for all official French and local government-sponsored events. centenaire.org/en

In Verdun, the sound-and-light extravaganza *From Flames to Light* takes place in an abandoned quarry daily from mid-June to the end of July every year (English headsets available).



LOCAL FLAVOR

SUDS DE FRANCE

Boasting France's oldest beermaking tradition, Lorraine led the country's beer production by 1900. The two World Wars put an end to that, but now the region is experiencing a craft brewery mini-revival with the emergence of award-winning *bières* such as Charmoy, produced in a 17th-century castle. Sample Charmoy at the European Beer Museum Tavern, in Stenay, or L'Estaminet pub in Verdun. At farm-brewery Ferme de la Vallée, in Rarécourt, artisanal tastes include both raspberry jam and lagers made from dandelion flowers.



Meuse-made beer

Jean-Paul de Vries leads chatty tours (with stops in local cafés) covering the now bucolic American battlefields in the Argonne Forest area, such as the Sergeant York trail. www.romagne14-18.com

WHERE TO STAY

A turreted manor anchoring a 35-acre park, the **Château des Monthairons** is a 25-room, family-owned hotel. The on-site restaurant turns out classic French meals in the intimate, parquet-floored dining room. From \$135.

Within walking distance of the American Cemetery in Romagne-sous-Montfaucon, cozy B&B **Villa**

Nantrisé features self-serve wine and beer, heated towel racks, and hearty Scandinavia-meets-France breakfasts. From \$80.

WHAT TO READ

Edward G. Lengel's *To Conquer Hell: The Meuse-Argonne, 1918* (2008) does a masterful job recounting the greatest battle the U.S. military had conducted up to that point. Compelling individual stories highlight participants from generals to doughboys.

All Quiet on the Western Front (1929), by Erich Maria Remarque, is the definitive war novel to date. The young German protagonist

reflects the thoughts of a generation of Great War soldiers.

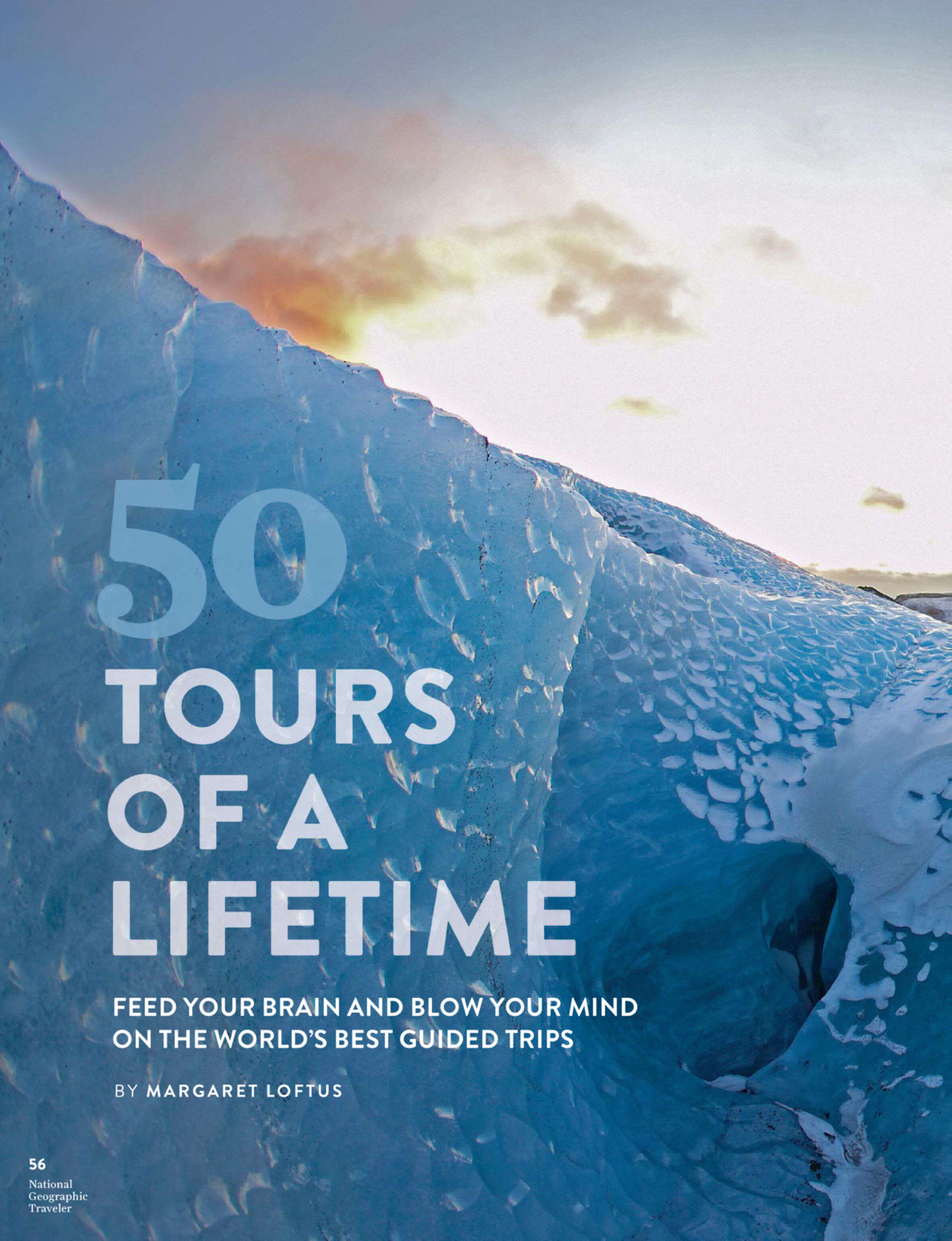
ATLAS



Seventy percent of France's best Brie cheese, the milky Brie de Meaux, is made in the Meuse area.

Lorraine native son Jean-François Pilâtre de Rozier, along with a French military officer, made the first untethered ascent in a hot-air balloon, in 1783.

With its dense forests, Meuse is the only place in France where boar hunting is on the rise.



50 TOURS OF A LIFETIME

FEED YOUR BRAIN AND BLOW YOUR MIND
ON THE WORLD'S BEST GUIDED TRIPS

BY MARGARET LOFTUS

A hiker on Iceland's
Sólheimajökull glacier



“DON’T TELL ME HOW educated you are; tell me how much you have traveled.” Every wayfarer instinctively understands this maxim. But can it still be true in an era of Wikipedia and 360-degree Google Street View panoramas, when countless facts about the world (and innumerable photos of it) are available 24/7 from our laptops and smartphones? Ah, but travel, when done deeply and thoughtfully, doesn’t just mete out the data. It opens us to truth and wonder. Immersion in another culture rewires our brains and makes room for information to organize itself into intelligence. For our ninth annual list of guided trips, we mined the ever expanding field to find 50 of the world’s best. Whether it’s researching your Scottish heritage, learning how to make cheese in Vermont, or getting up on a surfboard for the first time in Mexico, travel leaves us refreshed, smarter, and most important, wiser. —*The Editors*



Philippine rice terraces



Africa

BENIN, TOGO, AND GHANA Voodoo Central

Soak up West Africa’s cultural heritage: Join a voodoo ritual in Ouidah, boat around the village of Ganvié built on stilts in Lake Nokoué, and check out Lomé’s fetish market. *GeoEx*: “Mythical West Africa,” 13 days; \$5,550; www.geoex.com

BOTSWANA Africa for Kids

This adventure kicks off in the Makgadikgadi Pans, where travelers spend two nights under the stars on Kubu Island. It winds up in the Okavango Delta, where kids are schooled in bush survival and tracking skills. *Audley Travel*: “Ultimate Botswana Adventure,” 10 days; \$8,585; www.audleytravel.com

DEJAN SUC/GETTY IMAGES (TERRACES), THORSTEN HENN/CULTURA CREATIVE/ALAMY (GLACIER, PRECEDING PAGE)



Dancers at a voodoo ceremony in Benin

KENYA

Community Conservation

Longtime naturalist Wayne Sentman offers a behind-the-scenes look at conservation on this safari, from community health initiatives in Laikipia to a nonprofit that makes art from marine debris in the town of Watamu. *Oceanic Society: "Hyenas to Humpbacks,"* 15 days; \$6,280 (plus park fees); www.oceanicsociety.org

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Channeling Goodall

The Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park is home to 16 families of lowland gorillas and 10 solitary silverbacks. Travel via riverboat, 4x4 vehicle, and foot to track them in this untouched corner of a vast tropical rain forest that spans three countries. Your escorts are Baka Pygmies, whose ancestors lived here. *Extraordinary*

Journeys: "Untouched Africa: Gorillas of the Congo Basin," 10 days; from \$7,468; www.extraordinaryjourneys.net •

NAMIBIA

Desert Dreams

With veteran guides, visit San and Himba settlements and track endangered black rhinos and desert-adapted elephants in this remote wonderland of otherworldly landscapes.

Tack on a three-day extension (extra fee) to visit Sossusvlei's swath of epic sand dunes.

Africa Adventure Consultants: "Namibia: Secrets Revealed," 10 days; from \$4,995; www.adventuresinafrica.com

SOUTH AFRICA

Madiba's Way

The outfitter digs into South Africa's history to spin a unique itinerary around the

life of Nelson Mandela. Trace Madiba's journey from boyhood in the village of Qunu to his alma mater at Fort Hare. *Red Savannah: "Mandela Landscapes,"* 7 days; \$4,335; www.redsavannah.com ●

UGANDA, TANZANIA

Safari Plus

Tag along for a morning with Tanzania's Hadza people—one of the last of Africa's hunter-gatherer societies—on this custom journey that weaves cultural encounters with the region's iconic experiences, such as gorilla trekking in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park and game drives in the Serengeti. *Global Basecamps: "Beyond the Big Five: Uganda, Tanzania, & the Spice Island,"* 17 days; \$7,198; www.globalbasecamps.com ●

MADAGASCAR, TANZANIA, COMOROS, RÉUNION, MAURITIUS

Indian Ocean Odyssey

Madagascar and its wonders—dozens of species of lemurs, virgin coral reefs, prolific birdlife—are best reached by sea. Join a team that includes marine biologists and ornithologists on the

100-passenger *Island Sky* from Zanzibar's picturesque Stone Town, around the island's northern tip, to Chamarel's "seven-colored earths," a geological formation in Mauritius. *Zegrahm Expeditions: "Voyage to Madagascar,"* 19 days; \$13,980; www.zegrahm.com

MOROCCO

Sahara Overland

Ever dreamed of chucking it all and setting off on the sort of months-long, rugged, truck adventure made popular by this U.K.-based company? Here's your chance to sample overland travel without quitting your job, while soaking up the sensory overload that is Morocco, from the souks of Marrakech to a camel expedition in the Sahara. *Dragoman: "South Morocco Discovery,"* 10 days; from \$1,100; www.dragoman.com ●

ETHIOPIA

The Other Jerusalem

Dating back to the early fourth century, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church is one of the world's oldest Christian denominations. The centerpiece of this exploration of northern Ethiopia is the town of Lalibela, whose 11 churches—still in use—were hewn from three rocks some 800 years ago. *Rothschild Safaris: "Heart of African Civilization,"* 16 days; \$4,411; www.rothschildsafaris.com ●



DID YOU KNOW? Africa

FORGET WEDDINGS. FUNERALS ARE THE BEST PARTIES IN GHANA, WITH MOURNERS-FOR-HIRE, PLANNERS, AND ELABORATE "FANTASY COFFINS."

IN 17TH-CENTURY BENIN, THE TOFINU PEOPLE BUILT THE VILLAGE OF GANVIÉ ON STILTS IN LAKE NOKOUÉ TO ESCAPE WARRIORS WHOSE RELIGION FORBODE THEM TO ENTER WATER.

A SILVERBACK GORILLA CAN WEIGH UP TO 500 POUNDS, SPREAD HIS ARMS SIX FEET ACROSS, AND HAVE THE PHYSICAL STRENGTH OF SIX MEN.

Asia

ARMENIA, AZERBAIJAN, GEORGIA

Caucasus Culture Club

This specialist in travel to post-Soviet states has plumbed the rich culture of the Caucasus to deliver an itinerary with uncommon access, from a recital by Armenia's Luys Quintet to a private tour of the Atashgyakh Temple, built on a natural gas vent some 400 years ago by fire worshippers.

Exeter International: "Discovery of the Caucasus," 12 days; \$4,675 (*Tbilisi-Baku flight and some meals not included*); www.exeterinternational.com ●

INDIA

The High Road

From the desert landscape of Tibetan Buddhist Ladakh to the verdant mountains of Muslim-influenced Kashmir, the outfitter's signature

journey spans India's spectacularly scenic Trans-Himalaya, with stops for home visits and archery lessons along the way. *Wild Frontiers: "High Road to Kashmir,"* 15 days; \$3,932; www.wildfrontierstravel.com ●

IRAQ

Hello, Kurdistan

Now that it's no longer grabbing daily headlines, this land of stark beauty and hospitable



CHRISTOPH HITZ (ALL ILLUSTRATIONS)



An expansive view
of Tbilisi, Georgia

people is ripe for exploration. Join one of the few operators who have ventured here, from the cosmopolitan capital, Arbil, one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, to the mountain village of Ahmed Awa, where you'll connect with locals for a Friday afternoon picnic. *Explore!:* "Highlights of Iraqi Kurdistan," 8 days; \$3,840; www.exploreworldwide.com •

CHINA

Far West Tibet

Kicking off in Lhasa, this odyssey ventures where few travelers do. Marvel at the pyramid-shaped Tholing Monastery, walk among the nomad camps of the vast Chang Tang plateau, and pitch your tent on the banks of Lake Mansarovar. *WildChina:* "Expedition to Tibet's Far West," 21 days; \$5,810; www.wildchina.com

INDIA

Kayak Nirvana

Paddle the lush Kerala backwaters—a sprawling labyrinth of interconnected channels, lagoons, and lakes—and regroup at colonial villas for cooking lessons and ayurvedic treatments (extra cost). Stay two nights at an organic farm in the foothills of the Western Ghats. *Hidden Places Travel:* "Kerala: Kayaking, Culture, and

Cuisine," 12 days; \$3,750; www.biddenplaces.net •

JORDAN

Sands of Time

These American expats conversant in Arabic "burst the tourist bubble," says client Kathleen Weiss. "We camped and ate with Bedouin." *Engaging Cultures Travel:* "Jordan Insider," 10 days; \$2,199; www.engagingcultures.com •



DID YOU KNOW? Asia

THE FIRST TRAVEL GUIDE TO LADAKH, INDIA, WAS PUBLISHED IN 1911, WHEN BRITISH OFFICERS OFTEN TREKKED IN THE AREA DURING ANNUAL LEAVES.

JORDAN'S ANCIENT CITY OF PETRA FLOURISHED BECAUSE OF ITS ABILITY TO COLLECT WATER DURING FLASH FLOODING FOR USE IN DROUGHTS.

HO CHI MINH LIES IN STATE, UNDER GLASS IN A HANOI MAUSOLEUM, EXCEPT FOR OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER, WHEN THE BODY IS SAID TO BE IN RUSSIA FOR A TOUCH-UP.

MYANMAR Burma Cruise

This luxury operator has long been a fixture in the country. Now it's launched the 50-passenger *Orcaella*, nimble enough to ply the less traveled Chindwin River to find the remote Mahar Minkyaung monastery, home to the "Shwe Sagar" Buddha, carved from a single tree trunk some thousand years ago. *Belmond: "Discovering the Chindwin River Aboard the Orcaella,"* 12 days; \$5,610; www.belmond.com ●

PHILIPPINES
Terraced Wonders
Built into mountainsides 2,000 years ago, the Banaue rice terraces are a UNESCO World Heritage site. Explore these engineering marvels and share in rice rituals with descendants of the Ifugao people who created them. *Remote Lands: "The Philippines: Trekking the Terraces and Beyond,"* 7 days; \$3,230; remotelands.com ●

VIETNAM
Teach, Eat, Wander
Spend two weeks in Hanoi teaching English to youngsters, whose job prospects are

vastly improved by speaking the primary language of the Internet. Late afternoon and weekends are free for finding the best *pho*, appreciating the burgeoning contemporary art scene, and spying giant turtles in Hoan Kiem Lake. *Global Volunteers: "Vietnam Volunteer Program,"* 14 days; \$4,790; www.globalvolunteers.org ●

Oceania & Pacific Islands

AUSTRALIA Oz for Kids

Melbourne, Ayers Rock, Port Douglas, Sydney: This private tour hits the highlights with an eye toward engaging kids, with activities like sheep-shearing, eating traditional bush foods, catching mud crabs, and surf lessons at Bondi Beach. *Elevate Destinations: "Australia: Family Planet,"* 12 days; \$7,500; www.elevatedestinations.com ●

VANUATU The Original Bungee Jumpers

The centerpiece of this caving/diving/kayaking/trekking excursion on six of the archipelago's 80 islands is the *naghol*—a ritual on Pentecost Island in which men tie vines to their feet and dive off a tower to ensure a bountiful yam harvest. *Aspiring Adventures: "The Naghol,"* 14 days; \$3,375; www.aspiringadventures.com ●

AUSTRALIA
Tassie Romp
With nearly half of its landmass preserved as parks or reserves, Tasmania is an outdoor lover's paradise. Explore the stunning coastal stretch from Launceston to Hobart on foot, bike, and kayak, with stops in Freycinet National Park and Maria Island, which still displays cellblocks from the country's penal colony days.

Tasmanian Expeditions: "Cycle, Kayak, and Walk Tasmania," 6 days; \$1,794; www.tasmanianexpeditions.com.au

Europe

ICELAND

Winter Wonderland

Forget hibernation; Icelanders enthusiastically embrace winter. Here's your chance to see why: Hike the rugged coast of the Snaefellsnes Peninsula, snowshoe over the Blue Mountain lava fields, watch for orcas, and scan the night sky for the aurora borealis. *REI Adventures: "Iceland Winter Adventure,"* 7 days; \$3,199 for REI members; www.rei.com/adventures ●

ITALY

Novel Venice

Venice on foot is romantic; on water it's magic. Spend a week kayaking on the canals and around the barrier islands that protect the 212-square-mile lagoon. Rub shoulders with former gondoliers for a seafood luncheon at their clubhouse and a lesson in their

paddling technique. *Tofino Expeditions: "Kayaking Italy: The Venice Lagoon,"* 8 days; \$4,490; www.tofino.com ●

ROMANIA

Chez Dracula

Largely untouched by tourism, where it seems horse-drawn carriages outnumber cars, Transylvania is a window into Old World Europe. Travel on foot, horseback, and mountain bike between medieval villages, meeting farmers, shepherds, and beekeepers along the route. *BikeHike Adventures: "Transylvania Traverse,"* 10 days; \$3,299; www.bikehike.com

RUSSIA

Beyond Borscht

Inspired by the spike in interest for indigenous cuisine, this Russia specialist has cooked up a culinary-focused journey highlighted by a homespun meal at a dacha outside St. Petersburg. Vodka figures prominently, with a private tour and tasting at Moscow's Cristall Vodka Museum. *MIR Corporation: "A Chronicle of Russian Cuisine & Culture,"* 10 days; \$5,995; www.mircorp.com ●

SCOTLAND

Hebrides Hike

What better way to celebrate Scotland's Year of Homecoming—when the diaspora are invited back to explore their heritage—than to wander its coastal machairs (fields), peaks, and glens on the far-flung islands of Skye, Harris, and Lewis. *Wilderness Scotland: "Wilderness Walking: The Outer Hebrides and Skye,"* 7 days; \$1,682; www.wildernessscotland.com ●

SLOVENIA

Storybook Central

This cultural immersion into the Slovenian countryside is packed with hands-on experiences—beekeeping, pottery making, cooking *zlikrofi* (tiny tortellini)—and encounters



DID YOU KNOW? Oceania & Pacific Islands

ANTARCTICA IS THE ONLY CONTINENT WITHOUT AN OFFICIAL TIME ZONE. EACH RESEARCH STATION FOLLOWS THE TIME OF ITS HOME COUNTRY.

BRITAIN SETTLED AUSTRALIA AFTER THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR FORCED IT TO LOOK OUTSIDE THE U.S. FOR A PLACE TO SEND CONVICTS.

NAGHOL, OR LAND DIVING, IN VANUATU MAY DATE BACK 15 CENTURIES AND HAS BECOME A RITE OF PASSAGE FOR YOUNG MEN.



Cliffs in Maria Island
National Park,
Tasmania, Australia



The Hoh Rain Forest
in Washington State's
Olympic Peninsula



DID YOU KNOW? Europe

ICELAND'S 1783-84 LAKI VOLCANIC ERUPTION LED TO CROP FAILURES IN EUROPE, WHICH HISTORIANS SAY MAY HAVE SET THE STAGE FOR THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

IN NORWAY, REINDEERS' EYE COLOR APPEARS TO CHANGE FROM GOLD IN THE WINTER TO BLUE IN THE SUMMER.

GERMAN RICHARD WAGNER'S *RING CYCLE*—THE LONGEST OPERA IN HISTORY—TOOK 26 YEARS TO COMPLETE AND WOULD TAKE 15 HOURS TO PERFORM AS A WHOLE.

with farmers and artisans. *Kensington Tours: "Green Charms of Slovenia,"* 9 days; \$6,999; www.kensingtontours.com ●

FRANCE
Pyrenees Fieldwork
Ecologists know that climate change has already pushed alpine species to higher elevations. Help researchers track plants and wildlife in the delicate ecosystem of the Pyrenees; the results of the study may shape conservation policies. *Earthwatch Institute: "Wildlife in the Changing French Pyrenees,"* 8 days; \$1,695; www.earthwatch.org ●●

GERMANY, SWITZERLAND
Classical Act
This culture specialist has packaged performances by three of the world's top orchestras, including the Vienna Philharmonic, in an arts-centric tour of Berlin and Lucerne. Visit Wagner's lakeside home, and meet art collector Angela Rosengart between concerts. *R. Crusoe & Son: "World-Class Classical Music Lucerne and Berlin,"* 10 days; \$8,760 (excluding concert tickets); www.rcrusoe.com

NORWAY
Reindeer Roundup
Live with and work alongside a Sami family in Finnmark during the annual reindeer migration from the inland winter habitat to calving grounds on the coast. A glimpse into one of the rare indigenous cultures left in Europe, offered by a community-based outfitter. *Turgleder AS: "Reindeer Spring Migration,"* 8 days; \$5,476; www.turgleder.com/eng

TURKEY
Culinary Delights
Kebabs, *manti* (spiced lamb dumplings), baklava, *dondurma* (ice cream), the foods of Turkey are as wide-ranging as the cultures that once plied its ancient trade routes. Discover them on this culinary journey through Istanbul, Izmir, and Cappadocia, from a new travel venture by Whole Foods. *Whole Journeys: "Turkish Delights,"* 12 days; \$5,895; www.wholejourneys.com

North America

VERMONT
Locavore Trail
Eating local is arguably the Green Mountain State religion, and this Vermont-based outfitter has scouted the best bounty in its backyard for a unique itinerary that has you touring the country's only independent organic seed company and making mozzarella at Shelburne Farms. *Cultural Crossroads: "Dig Into Vermont's Edible Landscape,"* 7 days; \$3,368; www.culturalcrossroads.com ●

GREENLAND, CANADA, ALASKA
Amundsen's Way
The legendary Northwest Passage is navigable for only a few weeks a year, allowing the French-flagged, Clean Ship-rated *LAustral* to sail among its

ice floes from the west coast of Greenland to Anadyr, Russia, with a cadre of polar expedition guides and naturalists to fill in the blanks. *Compagnie du Ponant: "Northwest Passage Cruise From Greenland to Russia,"* 22 days; \$16,525; <http://en.ponant.com> ●

MONTANA
Buckaroo Country
A family-focused agenda that packs in plenty of Big Sky scenery, wolf-watching, back-country hiking, and horseback riding, with a tour of Little Bighorn Battlefield and a barbecue welcome at the company founder's ranch. *Austin Adventures: "Montana Family: Great Western Adventure,"* 6 days; \$2,298; kids \$1,838; www.austinlehman.com ●●

MEXICO
Surf and Turf
This dual adventure takes you biking up and down historic trails in the Sierra Madre and to surf lessons in the fishing village of Sayulita, home to breaks for the novice, pros, and everyone in between. *Access Trips: "Mexico Bike & Surf Adventure,"* 7 days; \$1,990; www.accesstrips.com ●

CANADA
Gallic Fun
Attention, thrill-seeking Francophiles: Get your adrenaline rush—cave swimming, kitesurfing, snorkeling with seals—and Paris-worthy croissants all in one vacation, on a French-Canadian archipelago off Nova Scotia. *Freewheeling Adventures: "Quebec: Magdalen Islands Multisport,"* 7 days; \$2,895; www.freewheeling.ca ●

DOMINICA
Caribbean Trek
Opened last year, the Waitukubuli trail is the sole long-distance trail in the Caribbean. Join one of the first commercial expeditions to hike its 114 mountainous

miles, from Scotts Head to Cabrits, past waterfalls, gorges, and sulfur springs. *World Expeditions: "Trek the Waitukubuli National Trail,"* 12 days; \$3,390; www.worldexpeditions.com ●

WASHINGTON, IDAHO, MONTANA
Race the Train
Up for a challenge? Bike 600 miles from Seattle to eastern Glacier National Park, through the Cascade, Selkirk, and Rocky Mountain ranges, and then climb into your private sleeping room aboard Amtrak's westbound train to retrace your route. *Bicycle Adventures: "Empire Builder Epic,"* 10 days; \$3,695; www.bicycleadventures.com ●

WASHINGTON
Backcountry Lessons
Plunge deep into Olympic National Park to experience all its majesty—jagged peaks, alpine lakes, rain forests, and rugged coastline—while mastering backcountry skills and learning about the ecology of the Pacific Northwest. *EverGreen Escapes: "Olympic Adventure,"* 6 days; \$3,450; www.evergreenescapes.com



DID YOU KNOW? North America

THE RACE BY EUROPEAN POWERS TO DISCOVER A COMMERCIAL ROUTE ABOVE NORTH AMERICA WAS IN PART DRIVEN BY THE MISCONCEPTION THAT SEAWATER DIDN'T FREEZE.

AFTER A TELEGRAPH CABLE WAS SEVERED IN 1910, MAGDALEN ISLANDERS SET A MOLASSES BARREL ADrift CONTAINING PLEAS FOR AID.

FRENCH EMPEROR NAPOLEON SOLD THE LOUISIANA TERRITORY TO THE UNITED STATES FOR \$15 MILLION, OR SOME 3 CENTS AN ACRE.

HAWAII

Kauai Campout

From base camp on the Waipa Foundation's secluded *ahupua'a* overlooking Hanalei Bay, experience the splendor of Hawaii's Garden Isle on foot, surfboard, and kayak, and lend a hand for a day to weed a taro patch or clean trails. The highlight: a guided paddle along the 16-mile Na Pali Coast. *Sierra Club Outings: "A Sunny Multisport Sampler, Kauai,"* 8 days; \$1,795; www.sierraclub.org/outings ●●

TENNESSEE

Cycle and Dine

The foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains have inspired the menu at the plush locavore temple Blackberry Farm—think haute cuisine meets country cooking—and a myriad of breathtaking bike rides. Enjoy both on this cycling trip based at the inn. *Trek Travel: "Great Smoky Mountains and Blackberry Farm,"* 6 days; \$5,499; www.trektravel.com

ALASKA

Birder's Heaven

The state is the ultimate North American frontier for birders. From the far-flung Pribilofs, with its 2.8 million seabirds—including one of the world's rarest gulls, the red-legged kittiwake—to Denali, Nome, and Barrow, this wide-ranging expedition appeals to avid birders and rookies alike. The trip can be broken up into two parts. *Field Guides: "Alaska,"* 18 days; \$10,050 including internal flights; www.fieldguides.com

Central & South America

CHILE

Cowboy Up

This horseback ride through Torres del Paine and Bernardo O'Higgins National Parks in

the stark southern region of Patagonia made veteran traveler Bryan Rees feel like a bona fide cowpuncher. "Drinking mate [traditional herb drink] with gauchos around a fire, cutting pieces of lamb off a spit, and learning to saddle a horse were moments that made the trip feel real and not planned." *Chile Nativo: "The Last Frontier,"* 14 days; from \$5,595; www.chilenativo.travel ●

BOLIVIA, CHILE

Across the Altiplano

Journey from the colonial city of Potosí through the Salar de Uyuni—the largest and highest-altitude salt flat in the world—to the oasis of San Pedro in Chile's stark Atacama Desert. Digs include minimalist-chic rehabbed shipping containers. *Explora: "Travesías From Uyuni,"* 8 days; \$5,080; www.explora.com

BRAZIL

Jaguar Safari

The outfitter has worked with local authorities and biologists to establish best practices for jaguar viewing, such as time limitations, and has been granted special access near the Taiama Ecological Reserve, home to the largest concentration of the cats in the world. *Wild Planet Adventures: "Jaguar's Trail: Pantanal to Amazon,"* 15



GEORGE STEINMETZ/CORBIS



Cacti on Bolivia's Salar de Uyuni, one of the largest salt pans in the world



DID YOU KNOW?

Central & South America

MORE THAN HALF THE WORLD'S KNOWN LITHIUM RESERVES—USED FOR CELL PHONES AND LAPTOPS—SIT BENEATH BOLIVIA'S SALAR DE UYUNI.

THE NAME PATAGONIA LIKELY DERIVES FROM EARLY EUROPEAN ACCOUNTS OF PATAGONS—MYTHICAL GIANTS UP TO 15 FEET TALL.

THOUGH CONTACTED BY MISSIONARIES IN THE 1940S AND 1950S, THE ACHUAR PEOPLE OF ECUADOR LIVED VIRTUALLY UNDISTURBED BY WESTERN CIVILIZATION UNTIL OIL DEVELOPERS ARRIVED IN THE 1960S.

tribes of rain forest peoples, the Sarayaku-Kichwa and the Achuar. Stay in remote villages, joining your hosts in traditions such as making blow guns, and participating in shamanic healing ceremonies. *Pachamama Journeys: "Amazonian Immersion,"* 14 days; \$3,495; www.pachamama.org ●

NICARAGUA, EL SALVADOR, HONDURAS

Ready, Set, Action

A packed agenda spanning the belly of Central America, from Managua to San Pedro Sula: Ash-board down Nicaragua's Cerro Negro volcano, release baby turtles in El Cuco, and kayak among the mangrove forests at sunset in Punta Izopo National Park. *KE Adventure Travel: "From the Pacific to the Caribbean,"* 14 days; \$2,465; www.keadventure.com ●

MARGARET LOFTUS, a contributing editor, has reported this package for the past nine years. She recently traveled by small ship to Ireland, Scotland, and Iceland.

days; \$7,198; www.wildplanetadventures.com

GUATEMALA Be There Now

Travel always demands presence of mind, but here's a trip that takes it a step further by weaving mindfulness techniques into the itinerary, like seated meditation on a rooftop in Antigua and mindful movement through ancient Maya

sites. *Journeys International: "Mindfully Engaging Guatemala,"* 7 days; \$2,450; www.journeys.travel

PERU Steep Climbs, Glorious Descents

Mountain biking on ancient Inca paths in the highlands surrounding Cusco and the Amazon jungle guarantees an experience not found on the

typical tourist track. *Sacred Rides Mountain Bike Holidays: "Cusco to the Amazon,"* 10 days; \$3,003; www.sacredrides.com ●

ECUADOR Cultural Deep Dive

Operated by an alliance that supports the cultural and territorial rights of the indigenous peoples of the Amazon, this journey travels to the ancestral lands of two distinct

MORE TOURS OF A LIFETIME

10 Trips From Nat Geo

ADMIT IT. Many of you got the bug to roam from paging through *National Geographic* magazine as kids. Indeed, the Society has been inspiring travelers for more than 125 years, in part by offering its own expeditions, designed and guided by its experts, from explorers to field scientists (and sometimes editors from this magazine). National Geographic Geographer Juan Valdés, who leads a trip to Cuba this year, explains, “We look at the island through a geographical prism to see colors we might not have noticed otherwise.” www.nationalgeographicexpeditions.com

FRANCE, SPAIN

In the Beginning

Join paleoanthropologist Donald Johanson for an exploration of prehistoric cave paintings that dot France’s southwest and the Basque country of Spain. “*Human Origins: Southwest France and Northern Spain*,” 10 days; \$6,995

ECUADOR

Evolutionary Trail

In the Galápagos, experience

Darwin’s living laboratory aboard the *National Geographic Endeavour* or *Islander*, accompanied by field scientists such as Lynn Fowler, the first female naturalist to work for the Galápagos National Park. “*Galápagos*,” 10 days; from \$5,490 (photo and family expeditions are also available)

ISRAEL, WEST BANK

Bridges to Peace

This journey was designed

in partnership with Arabs and Jews and inspired by the peace-building efforts of National Geographic Emerging Explorer Aziz Abu Sarah, who also leads the trip. “*The Holy Land: Past, Present, and Future*,” 12 days; \$5,795

ANTARCTICA

Going South

Join a team of experts aboard the *National Geographic Explorer* on this voyage from Ushuaia to the Antarctic Peninsula, and go whale-watching, penguin-spotting, and kayaking among icebergs. “*Journey to Antarctica*,” 14 days; from \$12,350

MALAYSIA, INDONESIA

Islands of the East

The new *National Geographic Orion* plies the South China Sea on the way to Borneo. Meet with National Geographic grantee Biruté Galdikas at Camp Leakey, the orang-utan research station she

established. “*Wild Encounters From Borneo to Bali*,” 13 days; from \$8,680

CHINA, NEPAL

Peak Performance

Renowned mountaineer Peter Hillary leads this overland expedition from the Tibetan Plateau to the North Face Base Camp of Mount Everest and into Nepal. “*Tibet and Nepal: Journey to the Highest Himalaya*,” 16 days; \$8,325

SWEDEN

Northern Nights

Head above the Arctic Circle to drive your own dogsled through Lapland wilderness, and, if you’re lucky, catch the aurora borealis. “*Sweden: Dogsledding to the Icehotel*,” 9 days; \$8,595

TANZANIA

Beyond the Safari

Trek alongside Maasai tribesmen in the Serengeti Plain, descend into Ngorongoro Crater, and forage with Hadza bushmen, one of the last surviving hunter-gatherer tribes. “*Walking Safari With the Maasai*,” 11 days; from \$5,095

CUBA

People to People

A horse whisperer and the “Picasso of Cuba” are just some of the locals you’ll connect with on this culture-focused itinerary. “*Cuba: Discovering Its People and Culture*,” 9 days; \$5,995

WORLDWIDE

Global Exposure

From Bhutan’s Himalaya with a high-altitude archaeologist to observing gorillas in Rwanda with an emerging explorer, this whirlwind journey gives you a behind-the-scenes look at the fieldwork of 11 of the Society’s most accomplished explorers. “*Celebrating Exploration With National Geographic by Private Jet*,” 24 days; \$76,950

Cheetahs in Tanzania’s Serengeti National Park





SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION

NEXT STOP

SIGNATURE EVENTS AND PROMOTIONS



Enter the Escape to Amarillo Sweepstakes

for a chance to win a four-day, three-night trip for two to Amarillo and Palo Duro Canyon in Texas. The Grand-Prize trip package includes round-trip airfare; hotel accommodations; rental car; and a visit to Palo Duro Canyon State Park. For official rules and to enter daily until May 30, 2014, visit ngttexas.com.



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Escape to breathtaking ocean views, fresh, local flavors, and the chance to see someone you love in awe of the world again. Discover what it takes to be awarded "Best Cruise Line Itineraries" nine years running, and why we can promise you'll come back new. Go to Princess.com to plan your cruise vacation.



Asheville's Calling

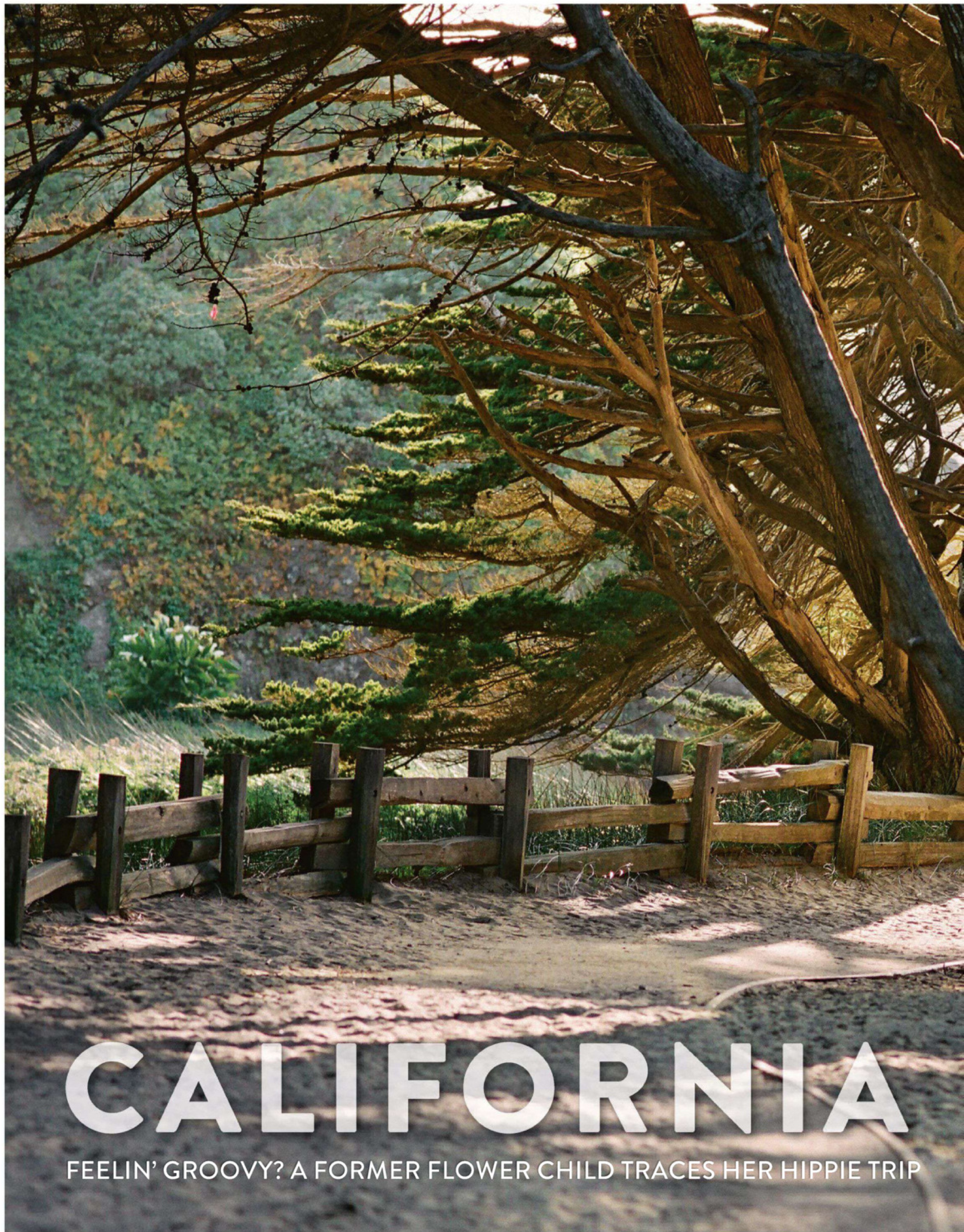
With its eclectic eateries, mountain adventures, and unmistakable downtown vibe, you'll find a good time any way you like it. It won't take you long to see why Frommer's has called Asheville, N.C., one of the world's must-see destinations. So answer the call to come explore Asheville, and dance to the beat of a different drum. Plan your unscripted adventure at ExploreAsheville.com.



Share Your Best Montana Photos

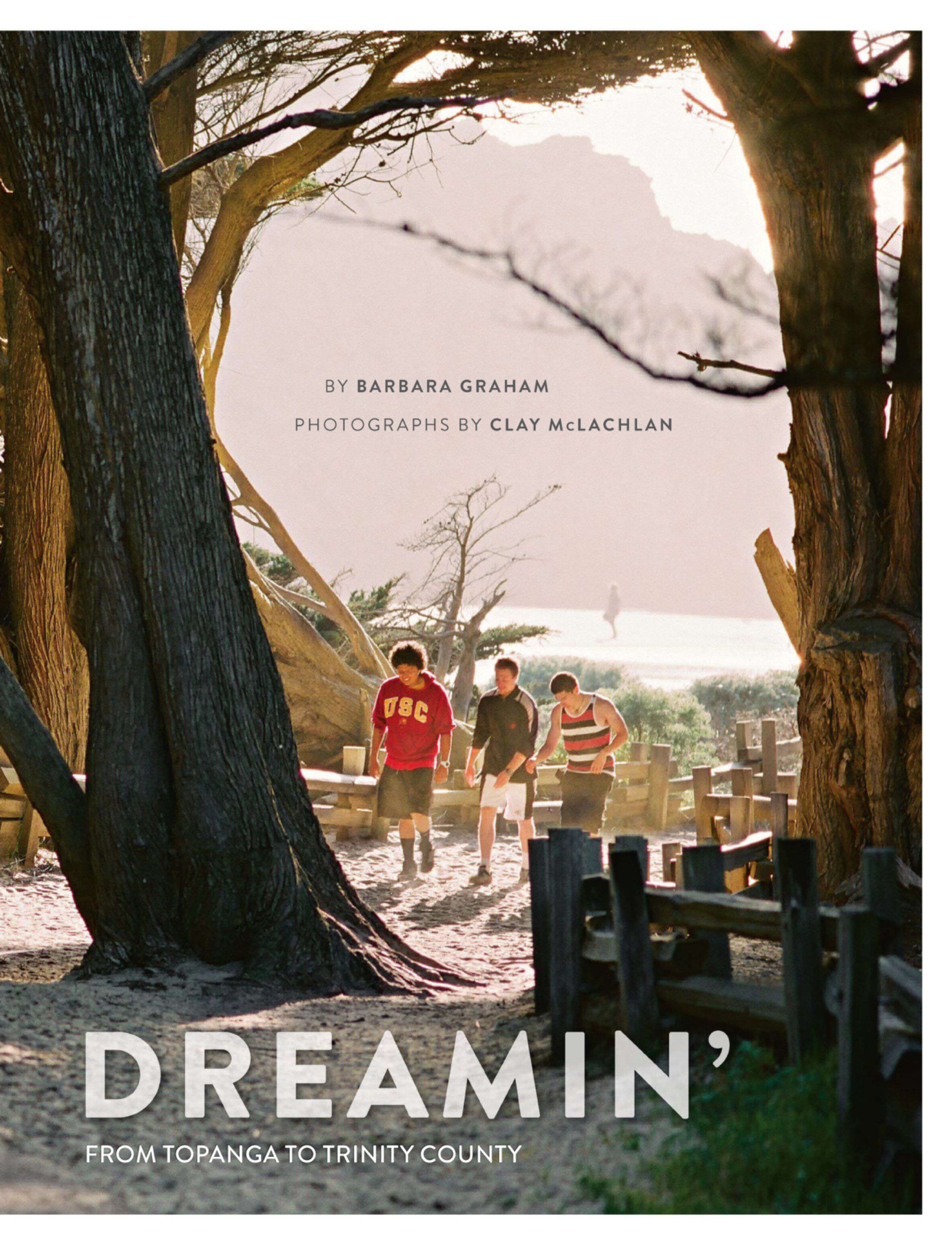
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CALIFORNIA

FEELIN' GROOVY? A FORMER FLOWER CHILD TRACES HER HIPPIE TRIP

A photograph of three people walking on a sandy path between large trees, with a beach and ocean in the background. The scene is captured in a warm, golden light, likely during sunset or sunrise. The path is flanked by large, gnarled trees on the left and right. In the background, a sandy beach leads to the ocean, with a lone figure visible in the distance. The overall mood is serene and nostalgic.

BY BARBARA GRAHAM
PHOTOGRAPHS BY CLAY McLACHLAN

DREAMIN'

FROM TOPANGA TO TRINITY COUNTY

I'd never come close to a shotgun before. Or a bear.

To me, a girl from New York City and the mother of a five-month-old son, that bear was as terrifying a threat as Godzilla. Luckily, it didn't attack us, but it did eat the Naugahyde window padding off our parked camper before my then-husband's shotgun blast sent it scrambling into the woods. That was in 1972. I was living far north in California, in Trinity County, with my son, Clay, and Brian, his father. A few months after the bear incident, we ourselves fled. Now, 41 years later, Clay, a professional photographer, and I are on a quest to find our old Trinity forest home, as well as the other hippie outposts throughout California where in my early 20s I went to transform myself from an anxious, urban college dropout into a free-spirited earth goddess.

Going "back to the land"—from which I never came—was Brian's idea. In those days I was so lost that I attached myself to my man's dreams like a barnacle to a rock. Still, what was I thinking when I agreed to make a go of it in the wilds of Trinity County? With a baby? Didn't I know that we could die of exposure if we tried to last out the winter in our primitive A-frame sans heat, electricity, and plumbing? Just as pressing to me now is this: Who would I be if I'd stayed?

THE FIRST STOP ON MY CALIFORNIA journey now, as it was then, is Topanga Canyon. Even though it's a short hop up the Pacific Coast Highway from Los Angeles, I feel as if I'm

entering an alternate universe as our car snakes up the ribbon of road that leads to the heart of the canyon. From certain angles, Topanga looks much the way it did when I arrived in early 1970, when it had already earned the nickname "Haight-Ashbury South." What's more, Topanga still retains some of its rugged Old West flavor.

Clay is astonished. "This place feels more like a thousand miles from L.A., not 30."

In a sense, Topanga's geography—sandwiched between the coast and the densely populated San Fernando Valley—has shaped its destiny. And though the striated, rocky outcroppings that rise like skyscrapers from the canyon's bowl lend Topanga a raw, rare beauty, the livin' ain't easy. Homes jut precariously from cliffs, and there is the ever present danger of landslides, floods, drought, and, especially, fire.

It's no wonder that the people drawn to Topanga can best be described as iconoclasts—from the homesteaders who arrived in the mid-19th century to the loners, John Birchers, leftists, beatniks, artists, blacklisted Hollywood types, hippies, environmentalists, and New Agers that followed.

"Topangans have very strong opinions, and they sometimes disagree, mostly over land use," says Ami Kirby, Topanga Historical Society archivist. "But the one thing that seems to unite everyone is a love of nature." Fortunately, the efforts of a forceful activist community have preserved much—but not all—of the canyon from development.

It was in Topanga that I first fell in love with California: The roaring Pacific at the base of the canyon, the scent of sage that perfumes the air, the broad, gnarly coastal oaks and the wildflowers that carpet the hillsides, the vast sky that enfolds you like an upside-down cradle.

As soon as we arrive, the search is on for the enclave of ramshackle wooden cabins where Brian and I lived for a year. This was also the place where Clay was conceived, though when I mention that, he shoots me one of those Mom-I-don't-want-to-hear-about-it looks.

After a few wrong turns, we find the place but not the cabins. I'm disappointed to see that a sprawling, gated ranch house has been erected on the site of our former hippie haven. But there's something about simply being here that sends me time-traveling back to 1970. I have a vision of myself in patched jeans and halter top, wild hair flying, as I scramble up the creek

The view from Garrapata State Park in Big Sur (left) can include migrating whales. Froggy's, with its laid-back patio (opposite), is a favorite Topanga gathering spot. Opening pages: The path to Pfeiffer Beach.





bed to the highest point on our mountain. Or leaning over a cauldron of hot wax in our cabin, batiking the T-shirts nobody wanted to buy. And I can almost hear Don, the troubadour of our little ragtag community, serenading us at dusk with “Me and Bobby McGee.” “Freedom is just another word for nothin’ left to lose.” Of course, we had nothing: a few found sticks of furniture, a bed, a couple of pots and pans. We didn’t care. We were unencumbered, free to reinvent ourselves and the world as we saw fit, and for a sliver of time in Topanga, I believed it.

After revisiting that previous lifetime, Clay and I head to the center of town to eat lunch at Topanga’s most famous restaurant, Inn of the Seventh Ray. The setting is like something out of a woodsy New Age fairy tale, with Buddhas, flowers, and angels everywhere. We take a table by a burbling fountain.

“Where the freak are we?” Clay asks after reading the back of the menu, which claims that the food has been charged with “the vibration of the violet flame” and may transport us to a higher plane.

In fact, the next day Topanga astrologer Lola Babalon tells me that because of its position between the mountains and the sea—fire and water—“Topanga has a very specific energy vortex that magically draws people and expands their consciousness. Some stay, but for others it’s like a blender, churning things up.” I fell into the second category, she explains. “For you, Topanga was a gateway. It cracked you open and broke down your dream of who you thought you were going to be.” Paradoxically, she adds, “Becoming a mom kept you from losing yourself. In a way, Clay saved your life.”

I reflect on this early the next morning, as I hike up to Eagle Rock—Topanga vortex central, according to Babalon. Clay is by my side. We’re quiet as we wend our way up the narrow trail to the craggy outcropping with its sweeping views from the Pacific to the valley. My heart is filled with gratitude for this son and this place where our journey together began.

THE NEXT PHASE OF OUR TRIP takes us over 250 miles north to the central coast and Big Sur—rocky, wild places where I alighted but didn’t live during my early years in California. This comes as a relief: no ghosts or old baggage along this stunning coastal route. Still, a few miles north of Hearst Castle, we happen upon Piedras Blancas, where thousands of beached elephant seals are screeching and appear to be dying. But, in fact, we’re witnessing nature at work: This is the time of year when females and juveniles shed an entire layer of skin. It’s a remarkable sight, and in a way I identify with these molting creatures. Throughout this trek I feel as if I, too, am shedding a layer of my past.

We spend the night at Treebones, a simple but elegant resort perched on a hill overlooking the sea south of Big Sur village. The accommodations range from yurts and campsites to a “human nest,” a woven wood shelter where adventurers can spend the night in harmony with nature.

Megan Handy, one of the owners’ daughters and our waitress at breakfast, explains that the eco-conscious resort was “inspired by ’60s back-to-the-land values, but with an understanding of sustainability and energy use that people didn’t know about in those days.”

Unlike Topanga, which may feel off the grid but is practically spitting distance from Los Angeles, Big Sur really is cut off by nature from urban sprawl. This is mostly good news—and the reason this untamed 90-mile stretch of the California coastline has been famously revered by so many, from Henry Miller to Jack Kerouac. But Big Sur’s isolation can also be bad news. Nature trumps everything.

“This is a very hard place to live,” says Don McQueen, an engineer and owner of the Big Sur Campground. At 85, a commanding six feet eight, McQueen is Big Sur’s unofficial conscience and historian. “The reality of life here doesn’t fit people’s fantasies,” he tells me over coffee at Deetjen’s, a funky and beloved restaurant/inn that he helped build when he was 11 years old. “The roads get washed out, the power goes down, there’s not enough water, and the fire danger is extremely high. Many folks who come don’t last long.”

From the Summer of Love to the Haight, the Magic Bus recalls San Francisco hippie highs with guide Sarah Shoshana David (left). Wildflowers (opposite) brighten a stretch of Highway 1 between Gorda and Big Sur.



THIS UNTAMED 90-MILE STRETCH OF THE CALIFORNIA
COASTLINE HAS BEEN FAMOUSLY REVERED BY MANY, FROM
HENRY MILLER TO JACK KEROUAC. BUT BIG SUR'S ISOLATION
CAN ALSO BE BAD NEWS. NATURE TRUMPS EVERYTHING.



Like many of my generation, I visited Big Sur and dreamed of one day living there. But the place I really want to show Clay, the place that is sacred ground to me, is Pfeiffer Beach. Not exactly a secret but not overrun either, this beach with its jagged, arched rocks that open onto the sea like doorways is one of the most beautiful on the West Coast.

There's a fierce wind gusting when we arrive, but we find shelter beneath the cliffs. Compared with the crowds at the Nepenthe restaurant and other spots along Highway 1, the beach is relatively empty. A few tourists take photographs; some young men scamper up the rocks ahead of an incoming wave; a woman with a crown of seaweed in her hair slowly creeps across the sand on all fours, trying to communicate with a seagull. The year could be 1969 or 2014. The seagull flies away. People come and go. The primal rhythm of the ocean thrashing against the rocks is unwavering. There's something about Pfeiffer Beach—its magnificence, the scale and dominance of nature—that comforts me even as it reminds me of how small I am, how fleeting my time on this earth.

I DIDN'T MOVE TO SAN FRANCISCO until 1975, but I did make a pilgrimage to the city in early 1967, the winter before the Summer of Love. I arrived soon after the first Human Be-In in Golden Gate Park and crashed with a friend of a friend on Stanyan Street. The Haight was overflowing with people. There were long-haired girls in brightly colored peasant garb dancing barefoot in the park alongside dreamy long-haired boys in serapes playing guitar and beating drums. The Diggers, a

radical commune of actors and activists, were everywhere, handing out food, and everybody was stoned out of their minds.

There's no way to revisit that San Francisco, especially now when the tech gold rush has transformed this once scrappy town into a place nearly impossible for the average person to afford. So Clay and I do the next best thing: We hop a ride on the Magic Bus.

The bus is a performance piece on wheels that aims to transport travelers back to the city in the '60s. With its psychedelic paint job and streaming soap bubbles, there's no mistaking the Magic Bus for one of the standard tour buses that clog Union Square. "This is not just a tour, it's a trip," says Artemis, leader of our "tribe." She offers each passenger a flower, à la the famous song lyric, "If you're going to San Francisco, be sure to wear some flowers in your hair." This and classics by the Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane, and other bands provide the sound track as we pass many of the iconic spots of the era: City Lights Bookstore, the original Fillmore West (now a Honda dealership), Golden Gate Park, a large mural of Janis, Jerry, and Jimi on Haight Street.

When the bus pulls up to the corner of Haight and Ashbury, the recorded narrative tells us, "To be standing here in the '60s was like standing at the center of the universe." True. And the trip aboard the Magic Bus gives Clay a sense of what it was like to be a young person in his hometown back then, even the darker bits—troubled runaway teens, bad trips, racial tension. For me there's something unsettling about taking an organized tour of my life. It's a reminder that the raucous, idealistic time with which I still identify is now (marketable) history.

FROM SAN FRANCISCO we head north on Highway 5. We're on a mission to find that Trinity County A-frame where we lived when Clay was a baby. For some reason I can't explain, I need to revisit the place where, at 24, I had my aha! moment and realized that living off the land in a remote location—no matter how beautiful—was not for me. The problem is, we don't know exactly where the cabin is or if it still exists.

As soon as we head west on Highway 299, the main road connecting the Central Valley to the north coast, I can see that of all the places Clay and I have visited, Trinity has changed the least. There still isn't a single stoplight or parking meter to be found in the county. With dense forests, snowy alpine peaks, abundant lakes, and the rushing river that runs through it, Trinity shows little signs of development.

Continued on page 85



The author (left) confronts memories at a weather-beaten cabin outside Weaverville, in Trinity County, where Trinity Lake (opposite) remains as wild a place to commune with nature as it was in the '60s.



STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS

BY CARL HOFFMAN

Inheritors of an ancient lifestyle, villagers maneuver a dugout canoe in Papua, Indonesia.

IT

A MONTH WITH



THE GREAT ADVENTURE

TAKES A VILLAGE

NATIVES IN THE JUNGLES OF NEW GUINEA OPENS A VISITOR'S EYES—AND HEART

THE TOWN OF AGATS PERCHES AT THE EDGE OF THE known world, the only place within 10,000 square miles of mud and jungle on the southwest coast of the western Pacific island of New Guinea that is even tenuously connected to anywhere else. There are no roads, no cars, just rickety boardwalks elevated over wetland, and it's here, right after dawn, as mist rises from the night's rain and the tropical colors of the blue river and green jungle are still rich, that our eyes meet—and we do a double take.

His are small and brown. He is bare-foot, his hair sticks up in tufts, and his septum has a hole the size of a dime. He reeks of sweat and smoke. A handwoven bag adorned with feathers dangles over his chest. He looks feral, and in a way he is. His name is Kokai, and he is an Asmat tribesman from the village of Pirien, where there are no artificial lights, no cell signals. We met when I visited his village eight months ago. I have learned some Indonesian since, and we chat. He tells me he came to see his son but can't get home, doesn't have the money. I'll pay for a boat back, I say, if I can come live in Pirien with him for a month.

It's that simple.

WE TRAVEL for many reasons: to escape, relax, learn, startle ourselves, sometimes to meet new people, sometimes to get away from familiar ones. But as visitors, we touch only the surface of a place. This time I'm traveling to be alone, to leave behind everything I know and use to define myself, and immerse myself in a village, a culture, without any filters or supports, in order to know it, feel it, subsume myself in it. Some anthropologists have done that, including Tobias Schneebaum in the Amazon and Jean Malaurie in Greenland. Only by going alone, with no connections, no alternatives, can I hope to enter a place and culture that is inaccessible not just in geography but in spirit. I have to stay long enough that I go from being alone to being accepted—if that's even possible.

So one day I'm alone in Agats, which isn't really being alone: My phone buzzes with incoming texts, diners fill the little restaurants, and there is a good chance I could get a seat, if I wanted, on one of the boats headed to the airstrip to the north. The next day I'm alone in Pirien, at

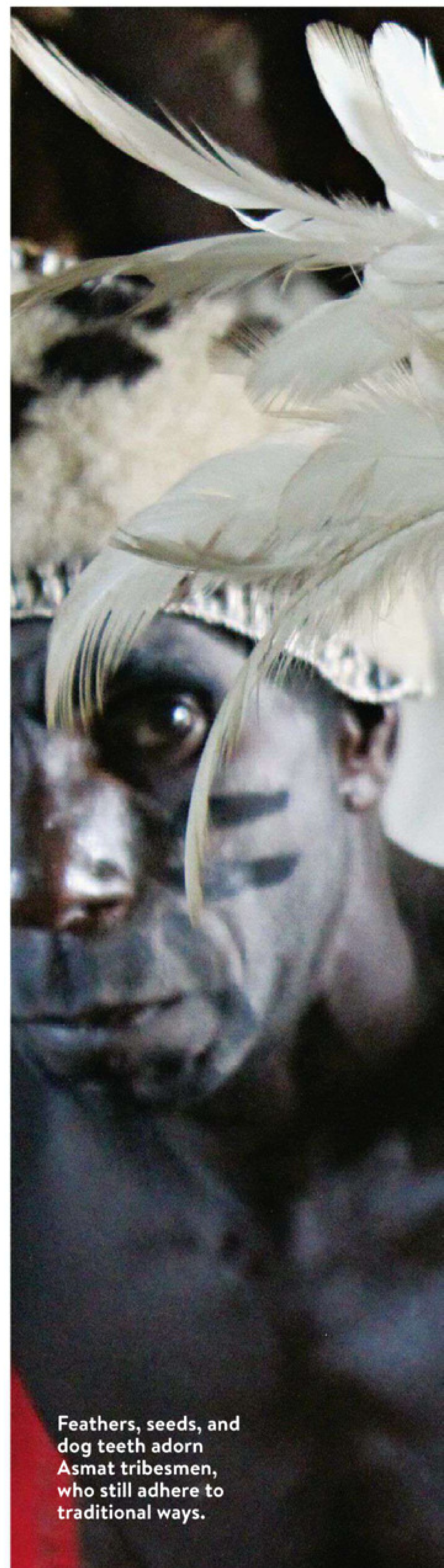
Kokai's tiny, smoky house, the boat that got me here drifting away. I'm encircled by a crowd of 50. This is a completely different kind of alone; I'm cut off from everything and everyone I know, surrounded by unfamiliar men, women, and children. I'm in a sea of otherness, with no control over anything. Pirien has no road, no electricity, no plumbing, no store. No one speaks a word of English. It's total surrender to absolute foreignness, to a remote community of former cannibals. In a lifetime of travel, this is the most intense thing I've done.

Thirty minutes after the boat has gone, severing my connection to the outside world, the crowd melts away, replaced by a group of men. Old men, like Kokai, barbed-wire thin and muscled, with holes in their septa and wearing fur headbands with white feathers. They each shake my hand, and we sit cross-legged in a circle on the ground. Kokai brings out tobacco I've given him, and the men each take a palmful. They talk and smoke—smoking is big in Asmat; it's the social ritual—knocking ashes onto the floor, adding to the dust that covers everything. They talk and talk, mostly in Indonesian, and I listen as best I can, catching the occasional word. They talk too fast, too colloquially, for me to understand. My legs hurt, my knees ache, but I sit still; what else am I to do?

When the men eventually trickle out, Kokai's wife brings one spoon and two bowls, each with a mix of noodles and rice, then disappears into the kitchen, which is a porch with a smoldering fire. The food has no seasoning, no salt. Will it make me sick? I have no idea. There is nothing I can do but eat, so I do.

The sun is setting, the light dying. Flies buzz and land on my hands, arms,

Continued on page 90



Feathers, seeds, and dog teeth adorn Asmat tribesmen, who still adhere to traditional ways.



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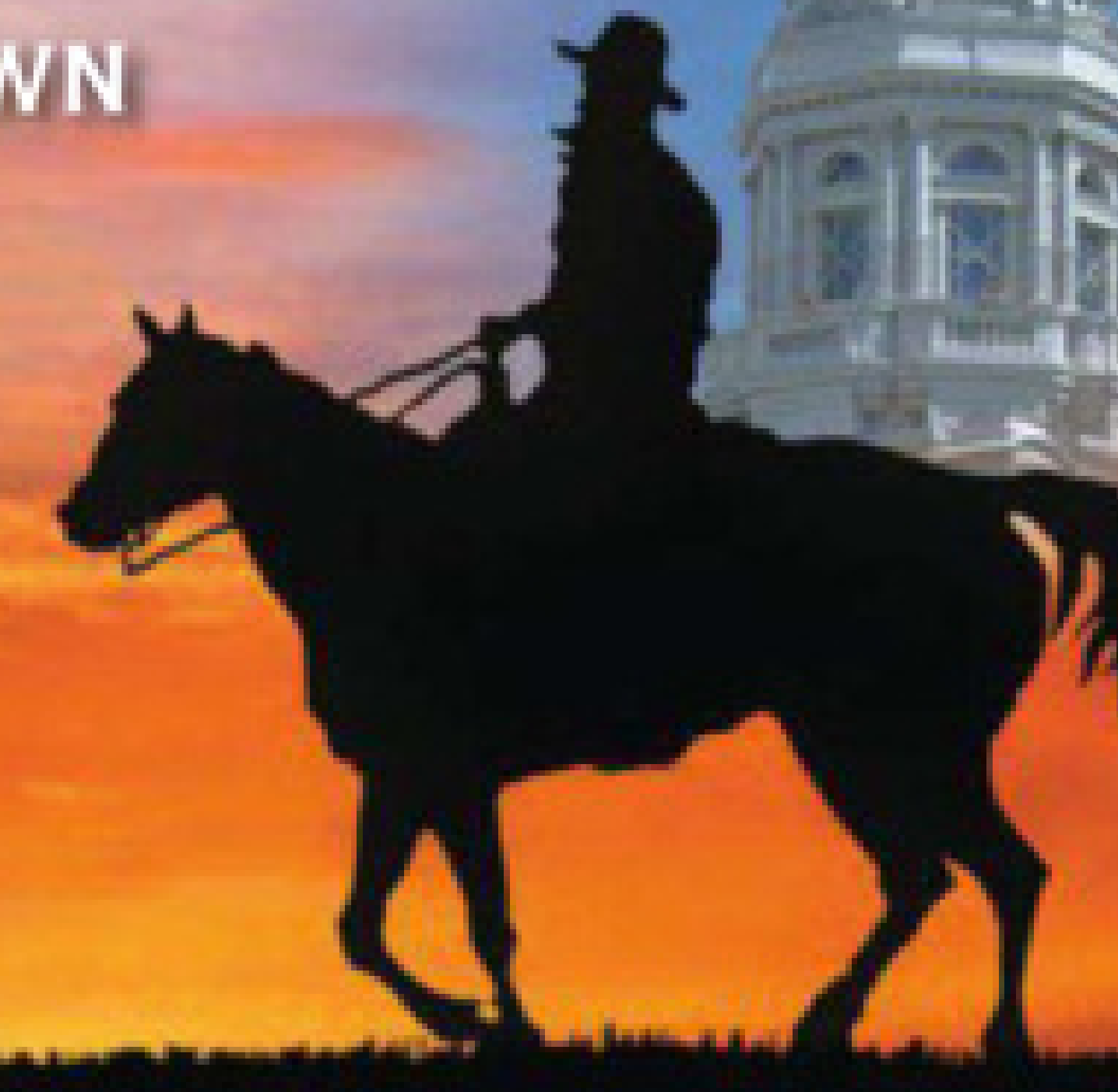
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California

Continued from page 77

We head into Weaverville, the county seat as well as the largest town. Weaverville could easily pass as the set for a remake of *High Noon*—only it's for real. My room in the antiques-laden but appealingly fresh Weaverville Hotel and Emporium overlooks the redbrick courthouse, erected in 1857.

I hope to glean some intelligence about the location of the phantom A-frame from Dero Forslund, a fourth-generation Trinityite. "I've sold a lot of real estate based on the back-to-the-land idea," says Forslund, an affable man with an encyclopedic knowledge of all things Trinity. We're meeting in the Jake Jackson Museum, surrounded by old photographs, tools, and pioneer outfits. "People move here to live a simple life, but not everyone can hack it," he admits. Before we part, Forslund, who is director of the museum as well as former county administrator, promises to sift through old tax records to try to find the site of the A-frame.

I worry that even with Forslund's help we'll never locate the property, which is starting to seem as elusive as Oz. "As great as it was to show you Topanga and the other places, I'm afraid this trip will feel incomplete unless we find that land," I tell Clay over dinner at La Grange Café in Weaverville.

"Did you say Topanga?" a woman at the next table asks.

This is when our adventure takes the sort of turn that happens only in movies.

I shift in my chair and see that the speaker is about my age. "You know it?" I ask.

The woman, whose name is Megan Curran, chuckles. It turns out that she grew up in L.A.—her father was a well-known Hollywood producer—and she hung out in Topanga (once with Crosby, Stills and Nash) around the same time I was there. In 1973 Curran ventured north to Trinity with a friend. She never left. And her son, Michael—her dining companion, who looks strong enough to wrestle a bear and earns his living leading wilderness trips—plans never to leave either.

It's not often that you come face-to-face with your doppelgänger, but

that's how my chance encounter with Curran feels. This is one of those rare sliding-door moments when I see who I might have been—and who Clay might have been—had I stayed in Trinity. Like Curran, who confesses that when she first arrived she didn't know you could actually grow your own vegetables, I probably would have raised as much of my own food as possible and done whatever else it took to survive here. And like Curran, who for 25 years worked as a cook at the local school, I would have had to find a way to pay the bills that, likely, would not have involved a career as a writer. Not surprisingly, Curran is friends with another '70s immigrant, Susan Holthaus, who happens to live down the road from the property where—yes!—the A-frame still stands.

In the morning everything comes together. Forslund phones me with the exact location of the land, and I call Holthaus, who leads me there.

Although it's been 41 years, the area feels as strangely familiar and unfamiliar as a dreamscape: the rutted dirt road, the rushing creek, the narrow bridge we cross to get to the property,

the tepee-shaped A-frame itself (pictured on page 76). At some point a small room and new roof were added, but the place has not aged gracefully.

It is startling to be here. I'm amazed that I lasted for even six months.

Holthaus describes the difficulties of living for years without electricity, having to scrounge for firewood, being snowed in for weeks at a time. "My family thought I was crazy," she says, adding that she had fled a few times when life seemed too hard. "But the beauty of the natural world always drew me back."

When I was new to motherhood—and unaccustomed to life without any modern conveniences—I wasn't able to appreciate the splendor. Still, I have no regrets—either about living here or leaving. Like Topanga and the other stops along the way, Trinity was part of the journey of finding myself and my home in the world.

After years on separate continents, **BARBARA GRAHAM** and her husband, Hugh Delehanty, now reside near her son, **CLAY McLACHLAN**, and his family, in Marin County, California.



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THE INSIDER

Countercultural California

THE GOLDEN STATE may be in the midst of a new tech gold rush, but there are plenty of places throughout California that attracted free spirits in the 1960s and '70s and still carry a torch for the Age of Aquarius.

WHERE TO STAY

The **Topanga Canyon Inn** feels like an Italian villa by way of Hollywood—rooms are named Fred and Ginger or Bogey and Bacall. Guests can take the ultimate Topanga hike from the inn's front door to towering Elephant Rock.

In Big Sur, the historic, rustic **Deetjen's Inn** serves heaping breakfasts. **Big Sur Campground** and

Cabins is a swanky (as far as campgrounds go) alternative.

The **Strawhouse Resorts**—the main building of which was fashioned from 575 bales of rice straw—offers cottages plus an organic coffeehouse along the Trinity River. On Main Street, the **Weaverville Hotel & Emporium** is in a Victorian building faithfully refurbished after an 1880 fire.

WHERE TO SHOP

To look the part while tooling around Topanga Canyon, don't miss **Bouboulina**, a roadside store dripping with tie-dyed blouses and dresses, as well as gauzy skirts in every color of the rainbow.

The **Henry Miller Memorial Library** sells all things Miller and Big Sur—books, posters, T-shirts. An impressive photo gallery and archive feature the author's letters and manuscripts.

In the heart of San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district, the **Love of Ganesha** is packed with crystals, incense, saris, sacred stones and statuary, bright silk scarves, and spiritual greeting cards. And for restless minds, a silent meditation room is available.

In Trinity County, the **Tibetan Treasures** store at Chagdud Gonpa—a sprawling Tibetan Buddhist retreat built on top of an old gold mine—features Tibetan prayer flags, *thangkas*, butter lamps, offering bowls, and, of course, Buddhas.

WHAT TO READ

Perhaps the best known author associated with Topanga is Carolyn See, who lived in the canyon for more than 30 years. Her novel *Golden Days* (1996) evokes arriving in Topanga, “loving that pure *climb* into the sky and the feeling that once you got up



WHERE TO EAT

COASTAL TABLES

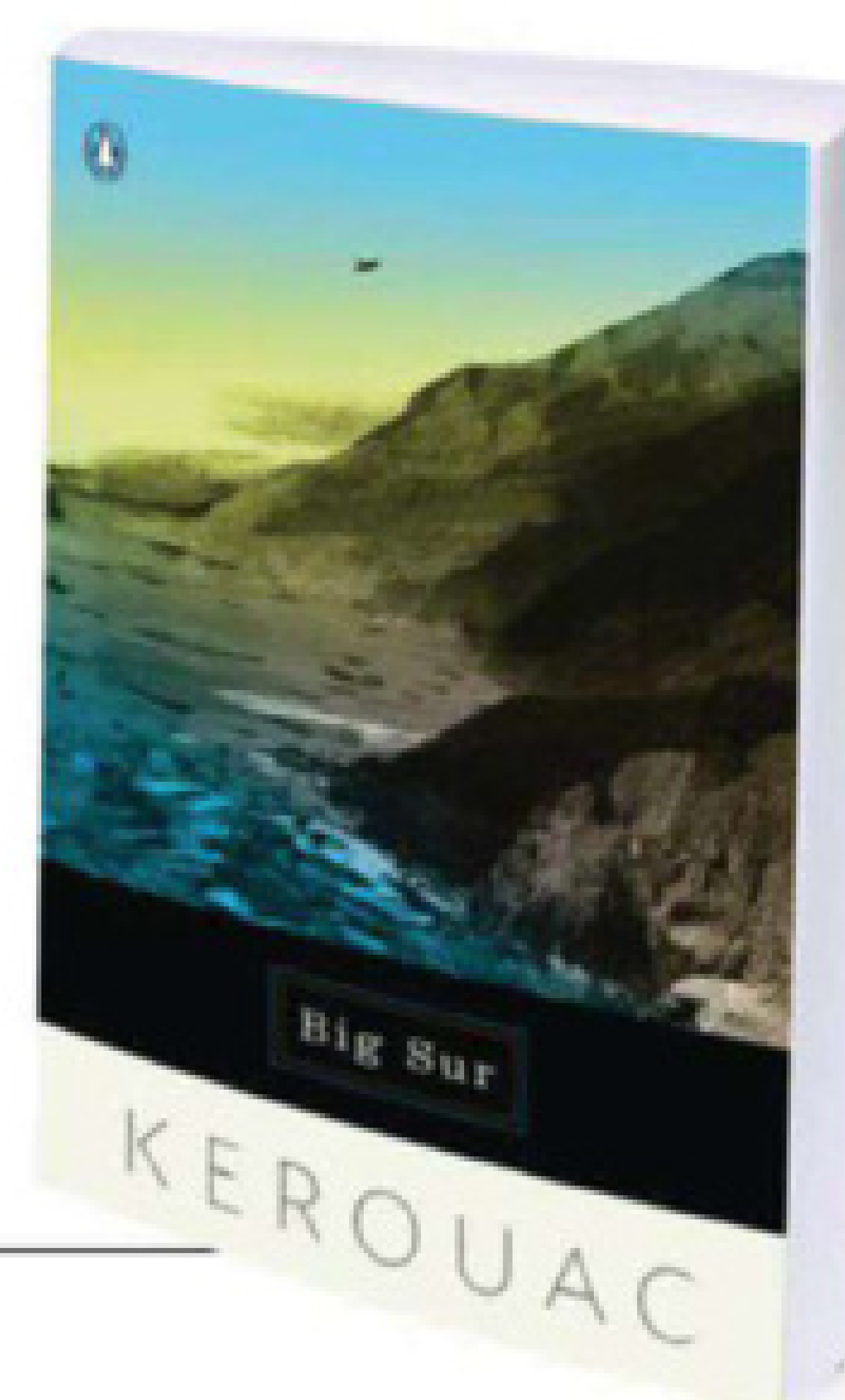
It's worth a pilgrimage to Big Sur Bakery & Restaurant for stellar sandwiches and pizzas, including the bacon and three-egg wood-fired breakfast pizza. For the price of a cocktail at the Post Ranch Inn's rooftop Sierra Mar bar, guests can drink in one of the most spectacular views along the coast.



there...you were safe.”

Jack Kerouac's *Big Sur* (1962) is a loosely fictionalized account of the time Kerouac battled his demons while staying at pal Lawrence Ferlinghetti's cabin among the redwoods.

Season of the Witch (2012) by David Talbot captures San Francisco in the turbulent years between the Summer of Love and the early 1980s.



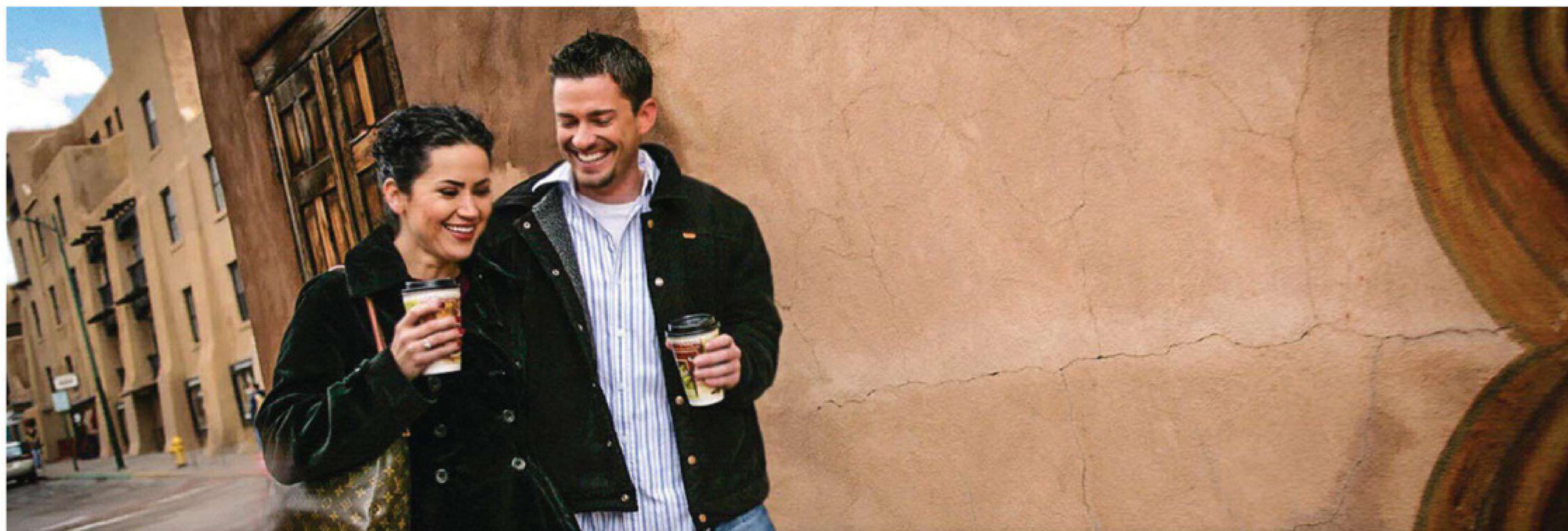
ATLAS



Musicians who performed at the Esalen Institute, a famed '60s retreat in Big Sur, include Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, and Ringo Starr.

The late Will Geer, best known as TV's Grandpa Walton, founded Topanga's Theatricum Botanicum stage in 1973.

The cliffside restaurant Nepenthe, in Big Sur, is located on property once owned by Orson Welles and Rita Hayworth.



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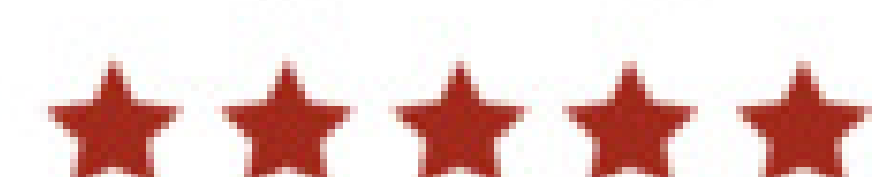
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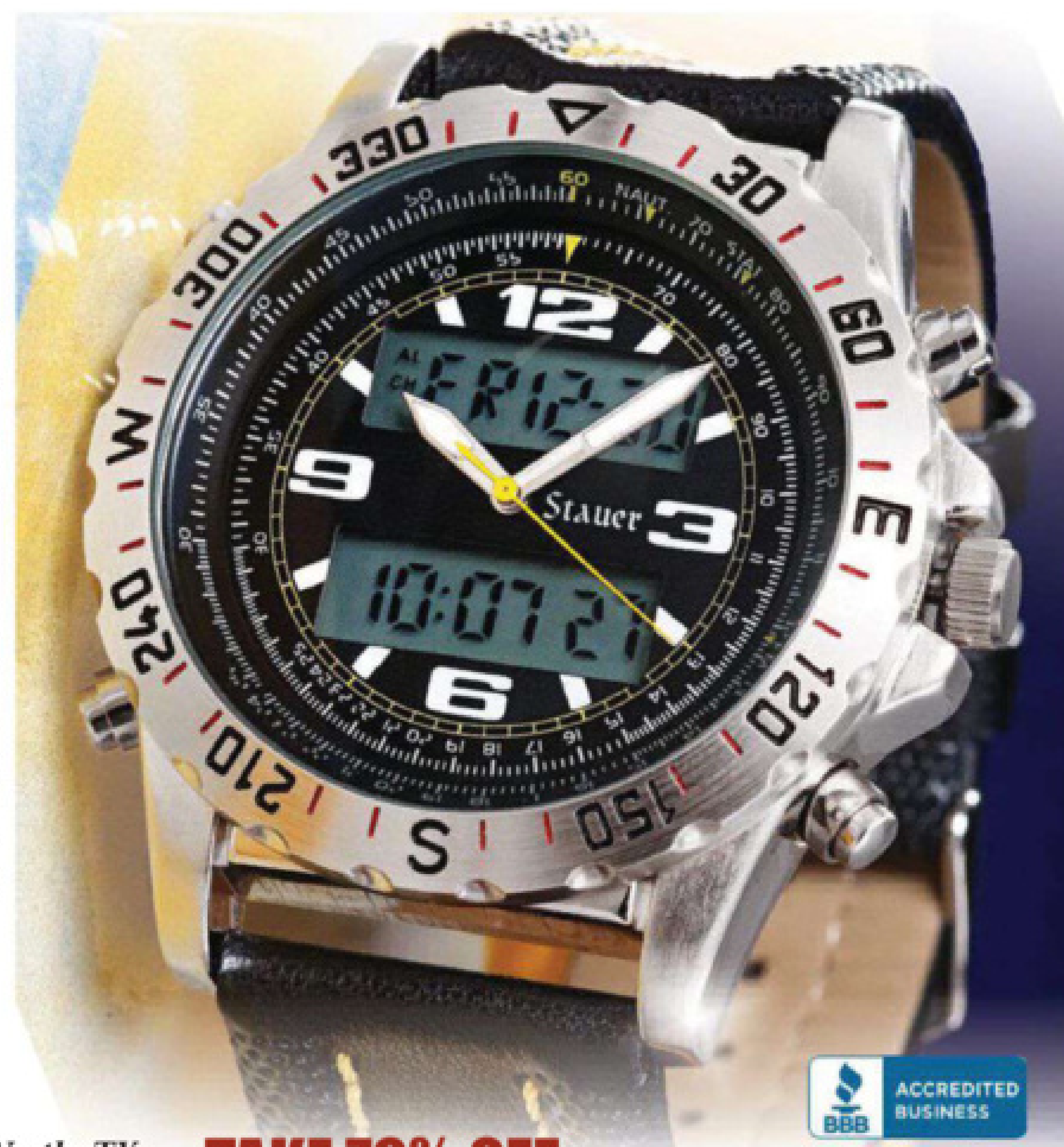
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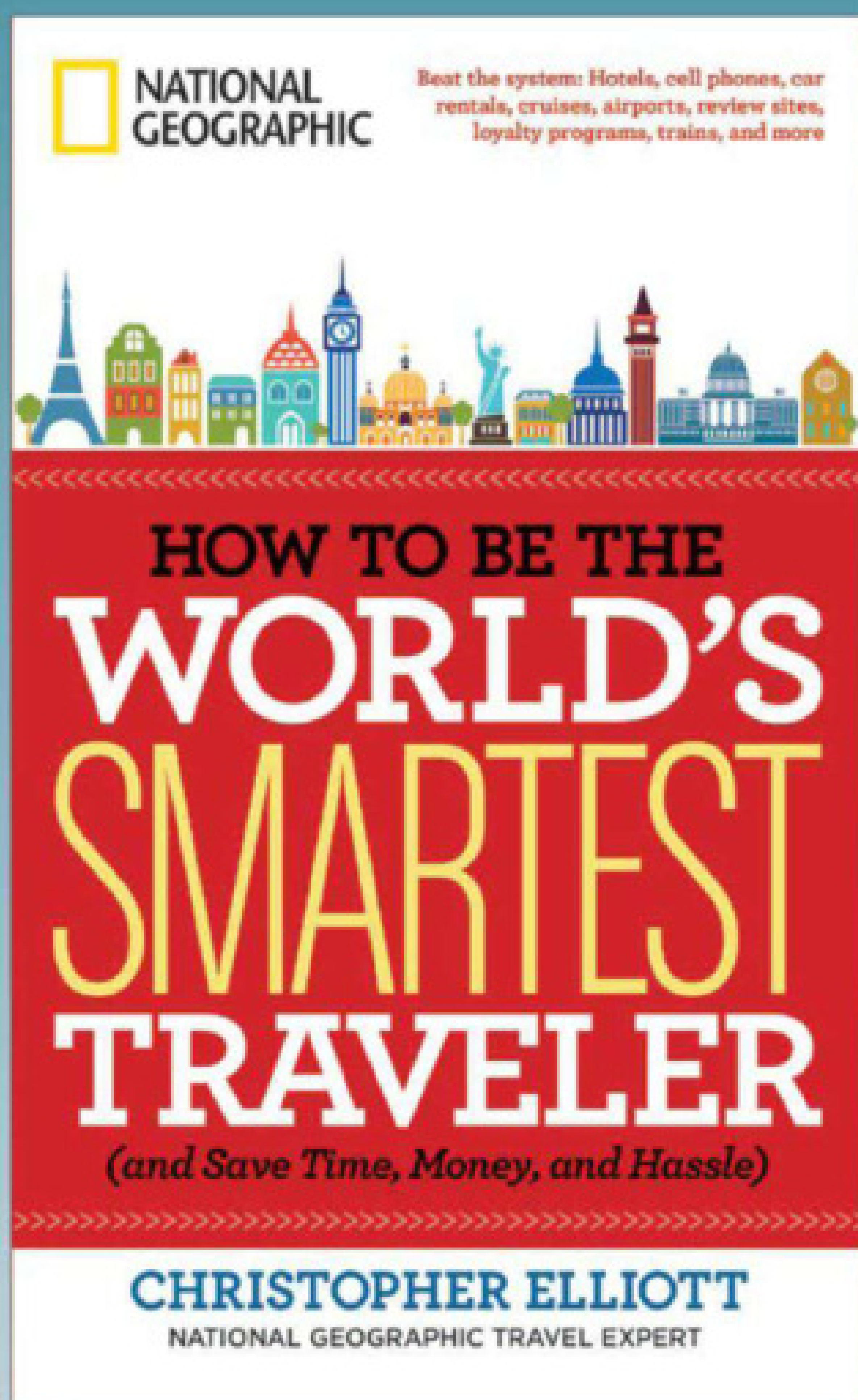


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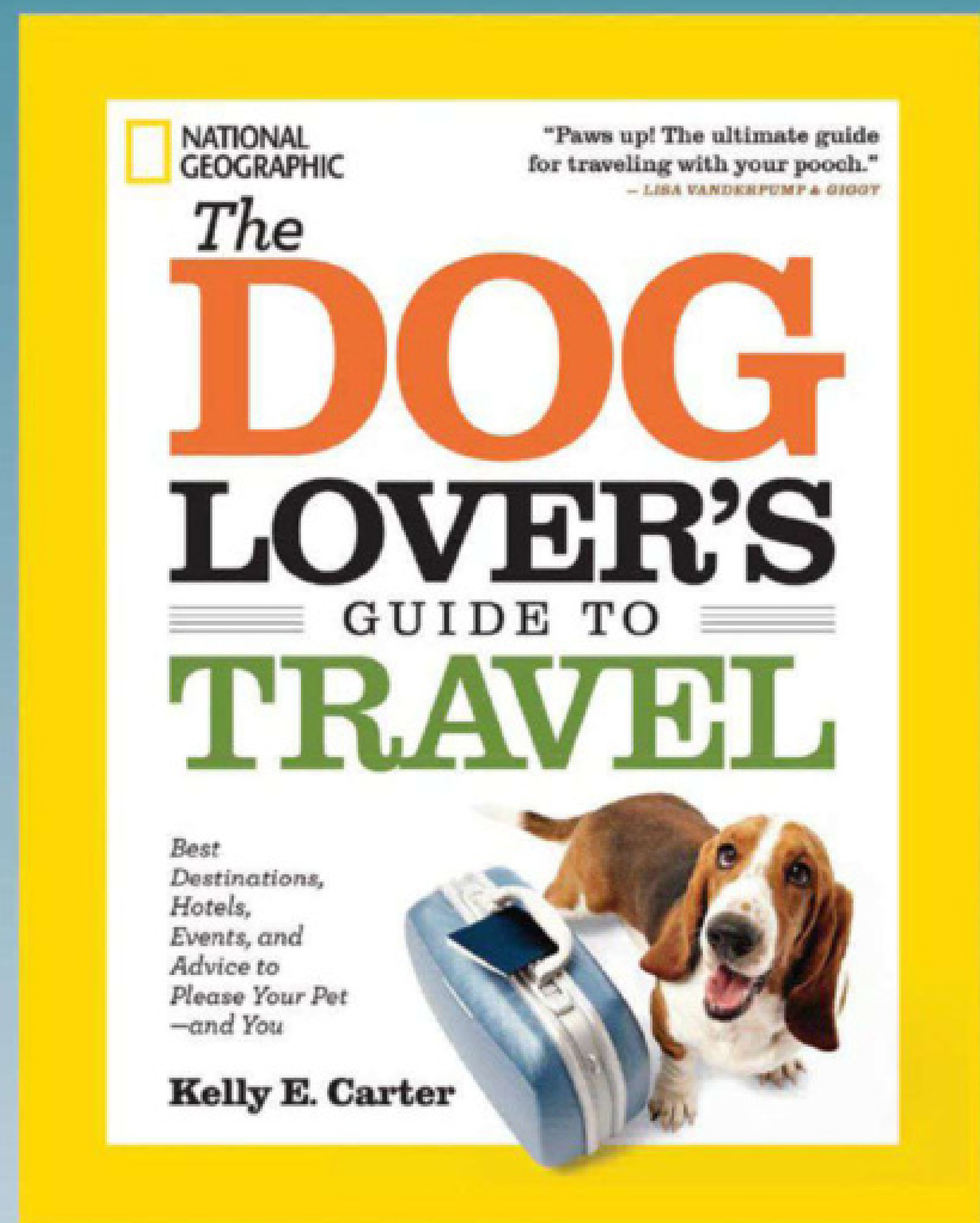
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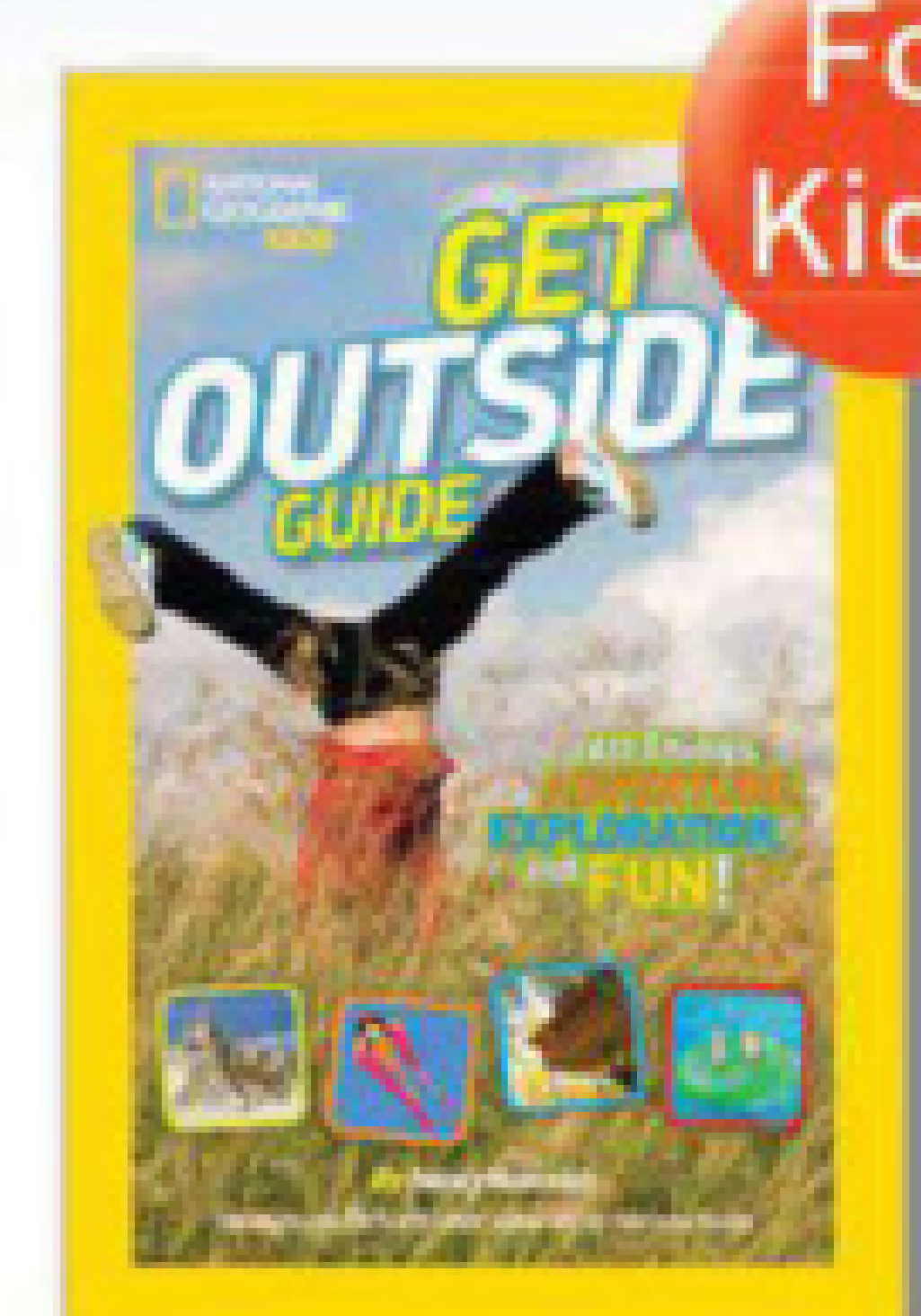
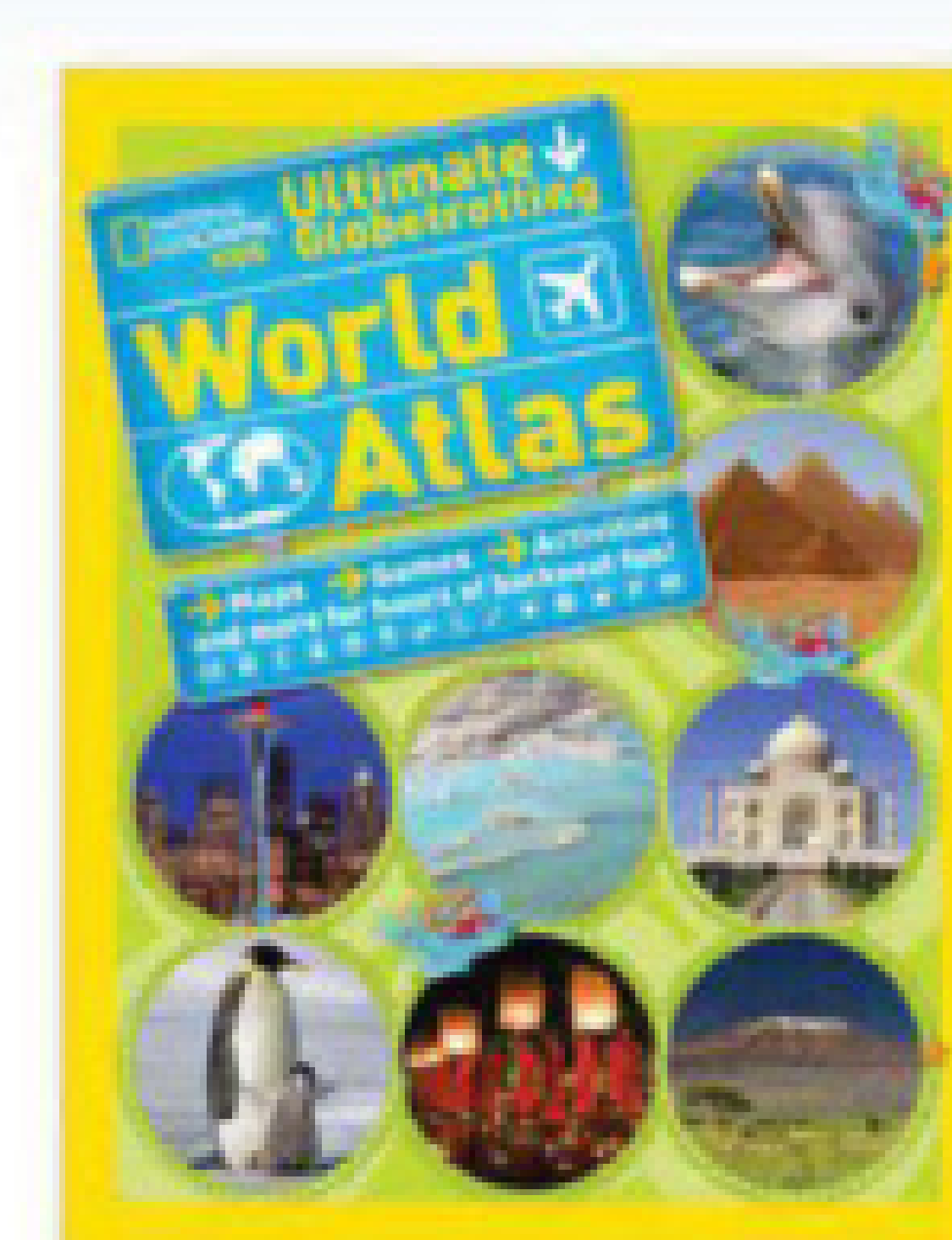
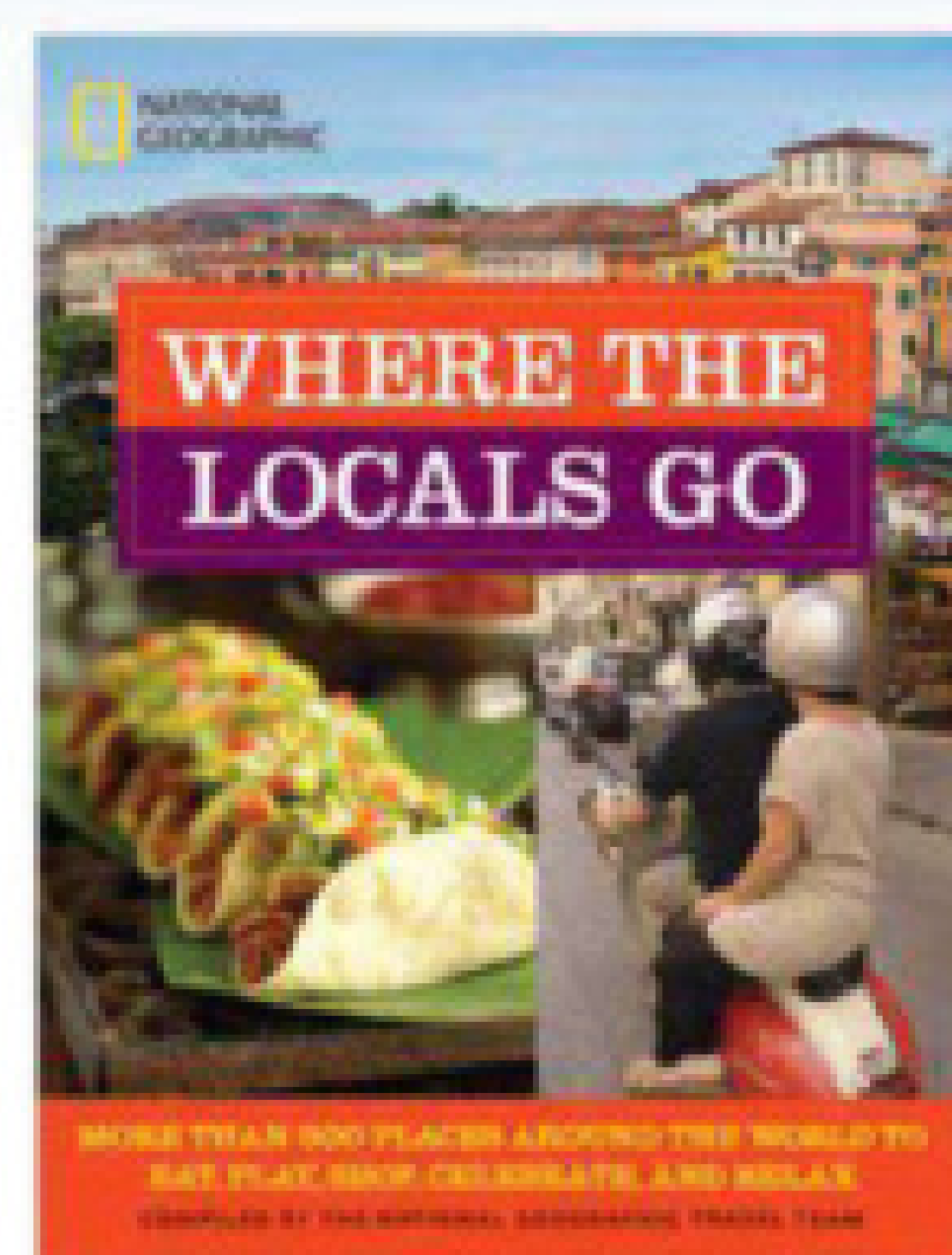
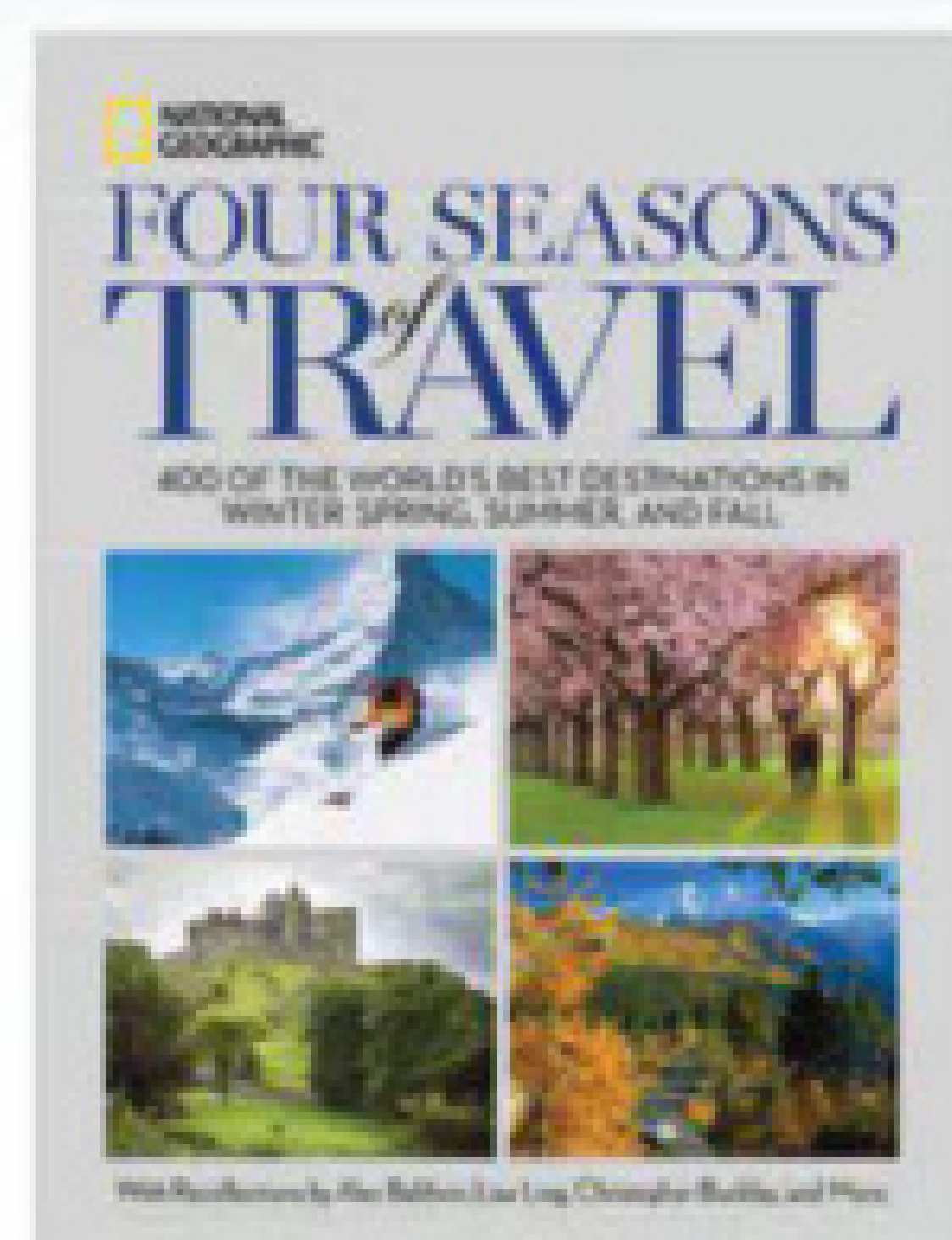


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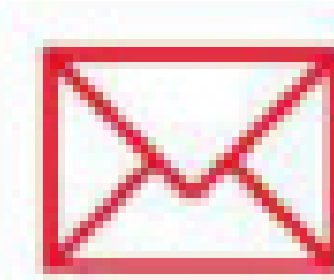


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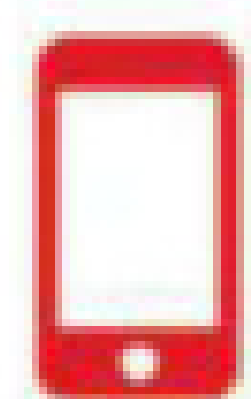
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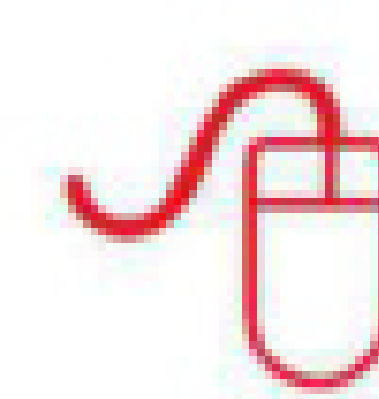
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Papua

Continued from page 80

legs, the food. Kokai eats with his fingers.

"Adik," he says to me. "You are my younger brother.

Later, we smoke on the front porch. Men come by, sit and smoke with us. Packs of dogs lope along the boardwalk, through the swampy ground beneath the houses, sometimes attacking each other in a wild scrum of barking and howling. The air smells of human excrement; the toilet is in the kitchen, a hole in the floor that drops to the ground. Other houses surround Kokai's, and each is filled with people using their toilets. The smell is pungent, rich, humid. It pervades the village. I never grow used to it.

Darkness falls, and bats pour out of the eaves. Heavy-footed lizards hammer across the roofs, sounding infinitely bigger than they are. Without a moon, the village is pitch black; I see nothing but the glow of Kokai's cigarette and heat lightning that flashes like a World War I artillery barrage. It's all a mystery to me.

The mosquitoes grow intense, so we head indoors, which is lit by one flame. People come and go, a constant stream of men, women, and naked children with runny noses. Time inches by. The month I have ahead of me feels like a year. I can't envision it, so I try not to. I'll try to never think about time while I'm here.

Time isn't the only thing different in Pirien. There are no familiar things. No beds, chairs, tables, books, no sheets or blankets, not to mention computers or phones. Kokai is an important man, the former head of the village, but he and his wife have only a sleeping mat and (soiled) pillow, a knapsack, a battered suitcase holding a few plastic bowls and cups, and spears, paddles, bows, and arrows. Slowly, they fall asleep on the floor. I slip into the mosquito net I brought and fall asleep too.

DOING THIS, being in Pirien, is about my giving up a sense of self. It's the most basic requirement. None of the wants and needs and desires I usually experience a hundred times every day have a place here. Check your calendar. Don't be late. Lock the door. Let's plan on tomorrow.

No. I have to let it all go. Or, yes. Yes to everything here. Yes to starchy sago rolls

and sago worms and tiny shrimp that taste like ammonia and more rice and noodles than I thought a human being could eat in one sitting—because sometimes there is no meal later.

I brought bottles of water, but they run out fast; then it's rainwater from barrels, water wiggling with mosquito larvae. It's the village water, so that's what I drink. But it runs out when it doesn't rain—and Kokai says if the skies don't open up soon, we'll have to go into the jungle and scrape water off plants. The barrel water does not make me sick, so I suck it down.

I'M NOT A MORNING PERSON. In a world without clocks, however, the sun dictates everything. Dawn hits just before 5 a.m. By 6 a.m. I've given up sleep, and emerge to find Kokai slipping tassels of cockatoo feathers onto paddles he has carved. Paddles, shields, spears, Kokai carves them all, and will sell them in Agats, his only way of earning money.

It's often the morning when he opens up to me, patting the space next to him for me to sit. We eat flavorless dry sago and small whole fish and smoke our first cigarettes and drink coffee I brought, a luxury for him. Pointing to the weapons, he shares their Asmat names. *Amun*, bow. *Jamasj*, shield. *Po*, paddle. Then he shows me a scar on his arm the size of a quarter.

"From an arrow!" He slaps his arm, slaps his thigh and groin—four wounds, one from an arrow that entered his groin and came out the other side.

"Otsjanep!" he exclaims, assigning the wounds to a war that split the village in two in 1964. He grabs a shield, hides behind it, advances, ducks, advances, pantomimes shooting an arrow. In a world without photography or television or recorded anything, the Asmat have remained oral storytellers, expressive with their voices and bodies, often telling of the chopping of heads and shooting of arrows and driving home of spears. When Kokai talks about canoeing, he bends forward and spreads his arms wide, becomes a canoe gliding over the sea. Once, he imitates a bat: He scrunches up, exposes his teeth, holds his hands as if he's clinging, and he is the bat. I can see it hanging upside down in a tree.

By day three, time begins to slip by faster, to have a rhythm. I make small friendships. Kokai, Ber, Sauer, Bif—all

elders—always make a place for me and tell me stories. My timing is lucky. Asmat villages are organized around clans, and each clan has its own men's house, or *jeu*, often more than a hundred feet long. The men of Jisar, members of one of five local clans, are building a new one.

In a clearing along the riverbank rises a sight from the Stone Age. A foundation of poles supports the rectangular framework for the new longhouse, to which the walls and roof will soon be attached. From each of the poles looking out to the river gazes a carved face. It's the first new *jeu* here in years, and celebrations will last until it is finished in three weeks.

A circle of men with drums sits in the center. Around them, others sit and lie. An old man in the circle motions to me, pats the floor next to him. Then, until the sun sets, and for many afternoons, I lose myself in tribal reverie. The men are decked out with dog teeth and boar tusks, cockatoo feathers sprouting from their hair and headbands, their faces painted ocher or black. The older men sport pig bones or shells in their septa. Sauer, the man I sit next to, is the *kepala parang*, the spiritual and cultural head of Jisar. He has the Asmat high cheekbones and physique of raw muscle and bone and black skin, which is smeared with war paint.

In the Asmat creation myth, a man named Fumeripitsj drummed the Asmat to life from carvings. Sauer and his *jeu* mates begin drumming themselves into existence, 200 beats a minute, and sing. Men dance and children dance, sweat pouring from them. Other men blow horns, which sound like foghorns, and the floor of the *jeu* pulsates. They move toward the river, and more men appear. Women do, too, some in grass skirts, their knees flapping as they dance like cassowaries. They howl and yell, a wild free-for-all of unadulterated joy and abandon, of culture that stretches back beyond memory. I gulp, then well up in tears. It is powerful and beautiful and unfiltered; it is pure and rich and of earth and river and mud.

MY MONTH, SUDDENLY, is over. The boat arrives anytime. Just as suddenly, that idea—of leaving, that I have to leave—seems as strange as the idea of coming here in the first place. The hours passed so slowly at the start, but then I stopped

noticing, everything a blur of heat and rain and smoke and drumming and sitting in stillness, the river always flowing, a metaphor in my mind for the slow but relentless passage of time.

The sound of an engine approaches. Kokai's son-in-law yells, "The boat!"

The intimacy, the quiet I'd slowly built over the month, evaporates into chaos. Villagers swarm from every direction, crowding into Kokai's house to bid me farewell. Kokai's wife brings out sago, and we eat and talk and laugh.

Then Kokai says, "You must give money to the *jeu* in Jisar."

I grab 300,000 rupiah—about \$25—and Kokai, Wilem the boatman, and I, trailed by a throng, walk to Jisar. Sauer and other men are there, fires glowing in the now finished structure. I hand Sauer the money. The men start a powerful chant, punctuated by grunts and shrieks.

Sauer says I'm welcome to return anytime. I speak as eloquently as I can in Indonesian, thanking them for their warm welcome, for always making me feel at home, for sharing their sago. We all shake hands, leathery and warm, and I take my last breath of the *jeu*, rich with the smell of bodies and smoke.

I'd been so alone when I got here, the most alone I had ever been. Now I'm not. I'm not even sure when that happened.

We return to Kokai's, and it happens so fast. Men grab my bags and throw them in the boat.

"Photo," I yell, "of the family!"

Kokai and his brood stand with me as someone snaps us with my cellphone.

Then Kokai takes my hand, says "Adik" (younger brother), rubs my hand along his cheek. It is one moment, one word, one action. One moment in a month of living in a primitive village in the middle of a jungle. But that's what life is, really, a collection of tiny slices of grace, love, and generosity that is the stuff of happiness. I arrived, alone and nervous, in a remote Papuan village to the inscrutable glare of wooden faces, and am leaving a month later with a brother. Kokai's gesture, I think, is nothing short of benediction.

CARL HOFFMAN's latest book is *Savage Harvest: A Tale of Cannibals, Colonialism, and Michael Rockefeller's Tragic Quest for Primitive Art* (William Morrow, 2014). To learn more, see the Editor's Note (page 4).



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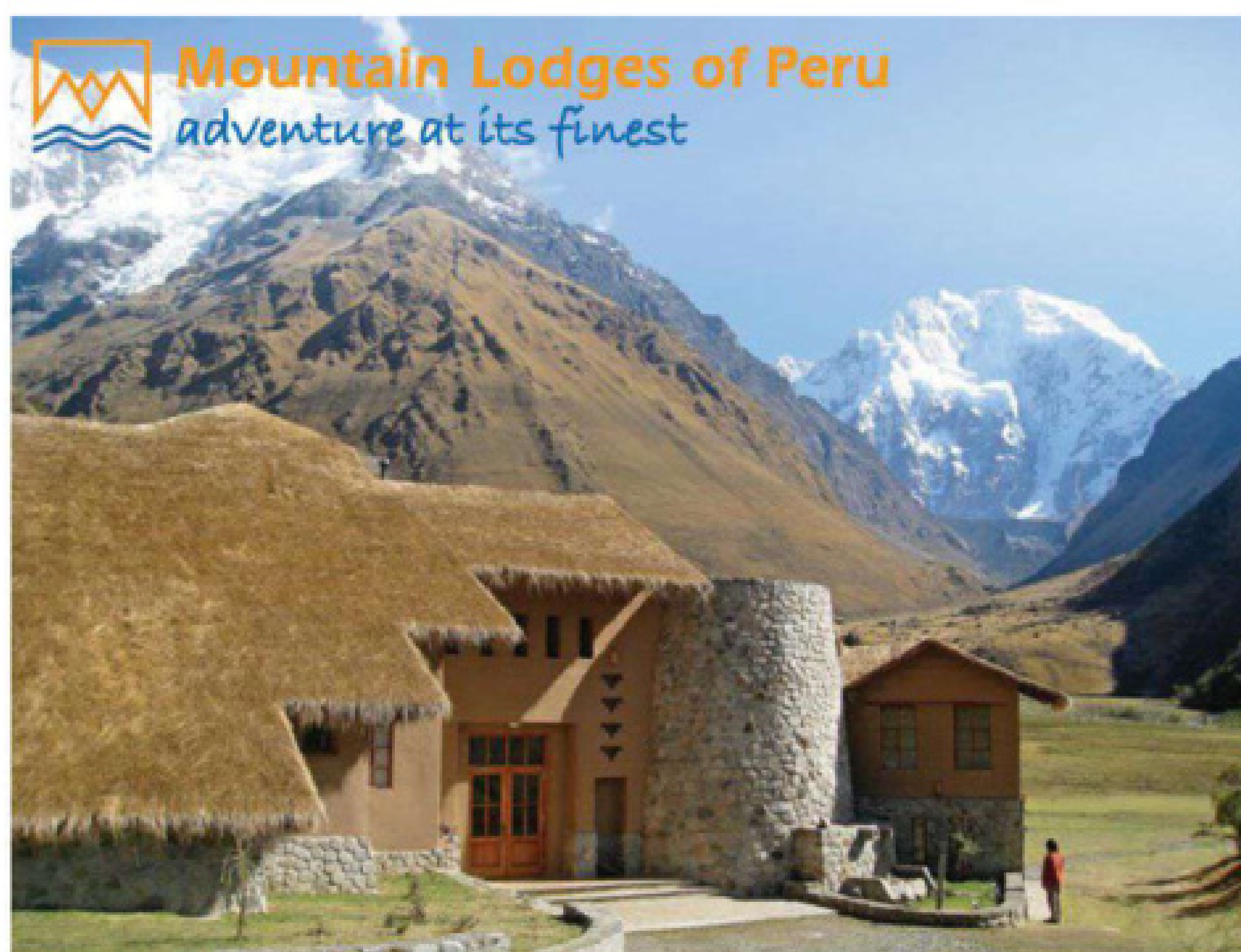
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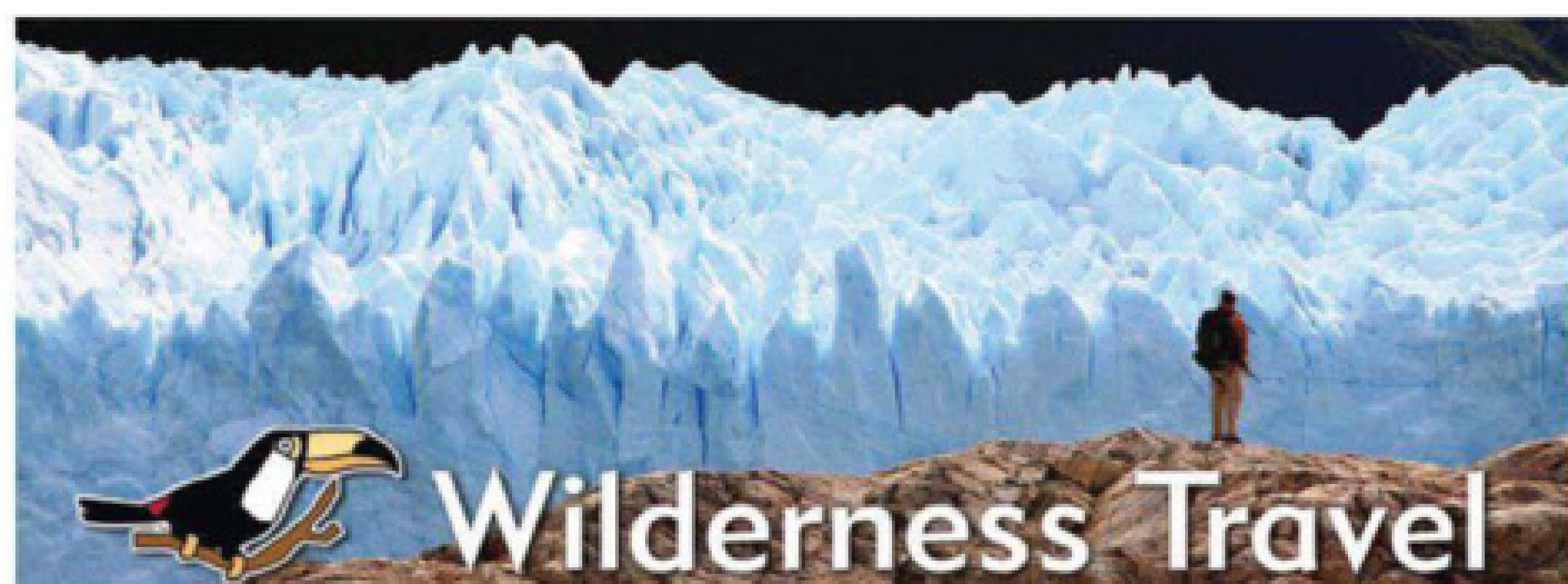
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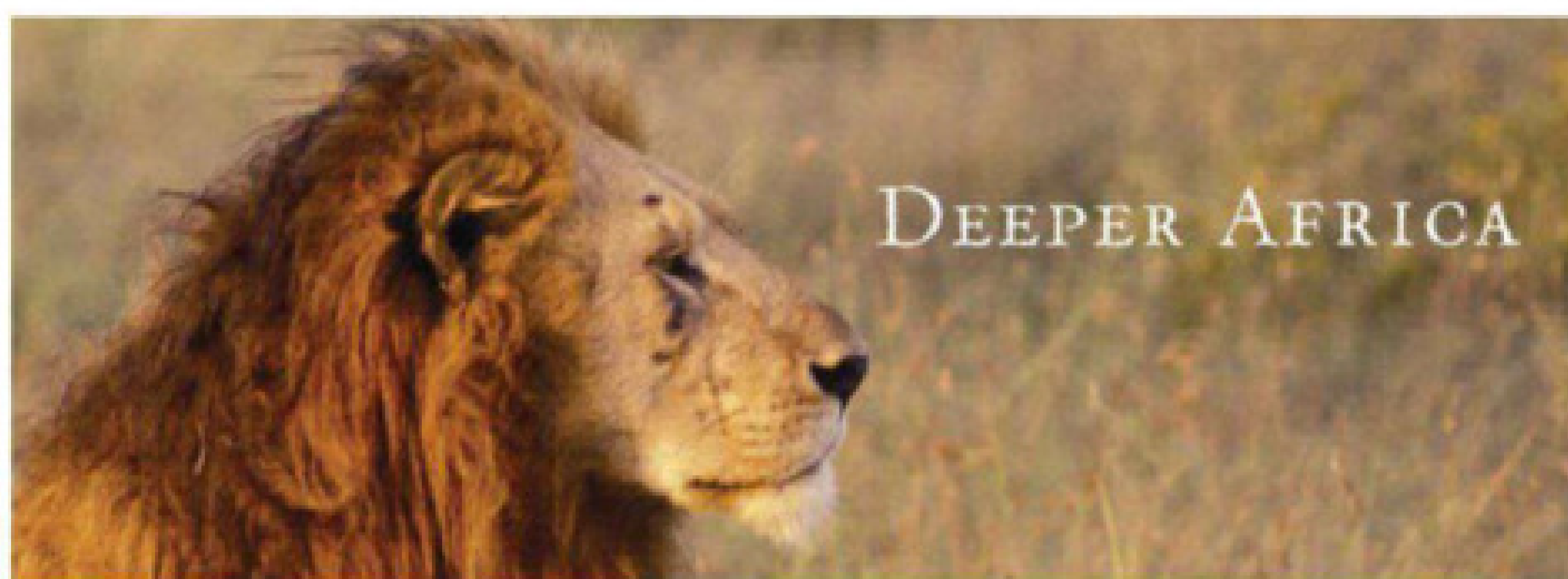
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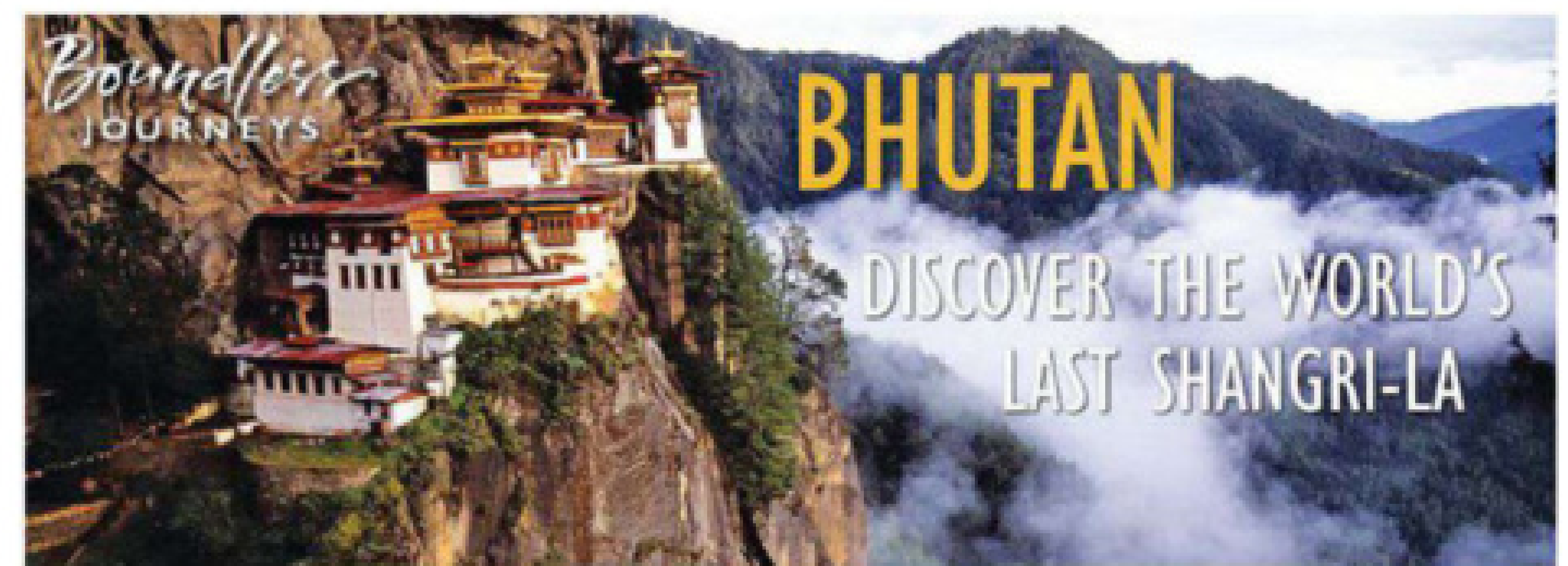
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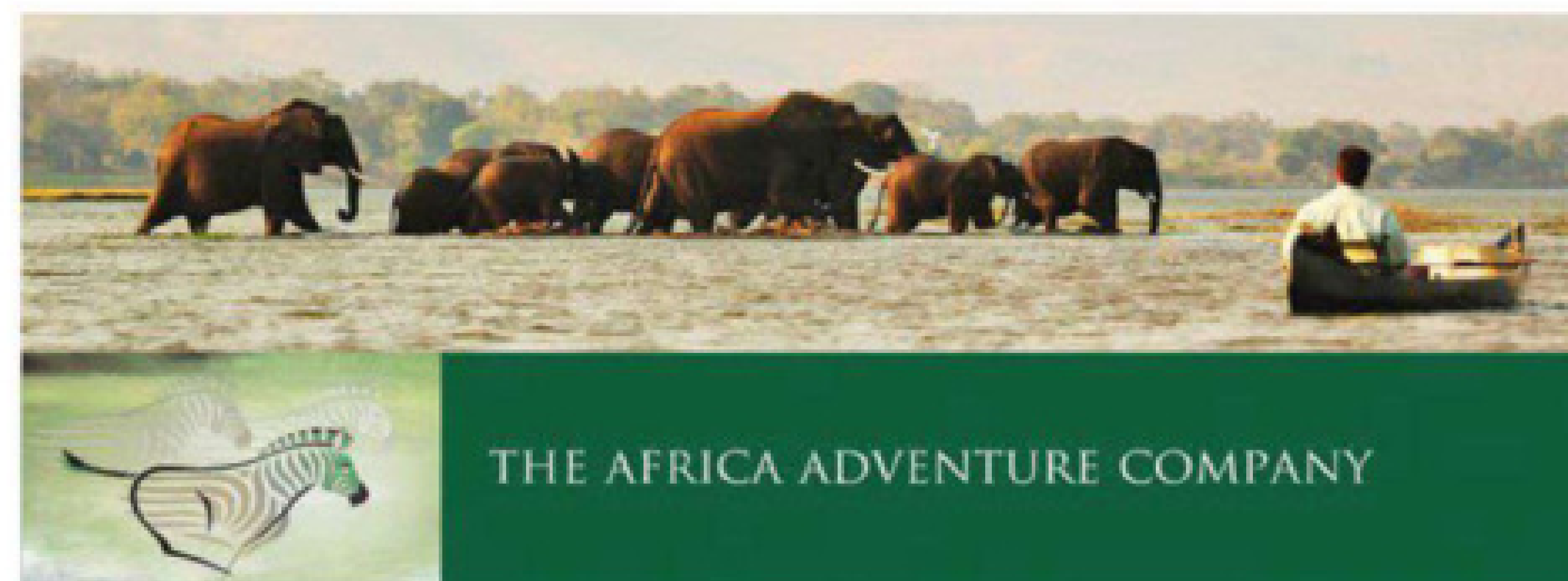
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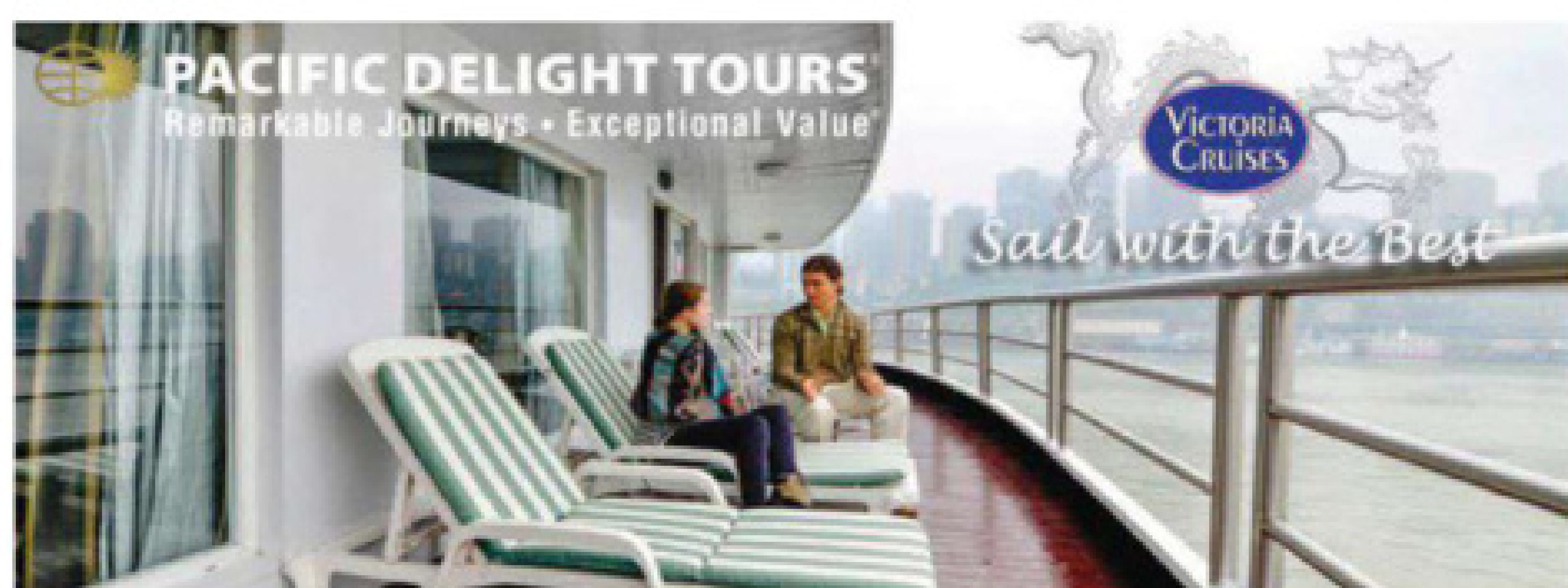
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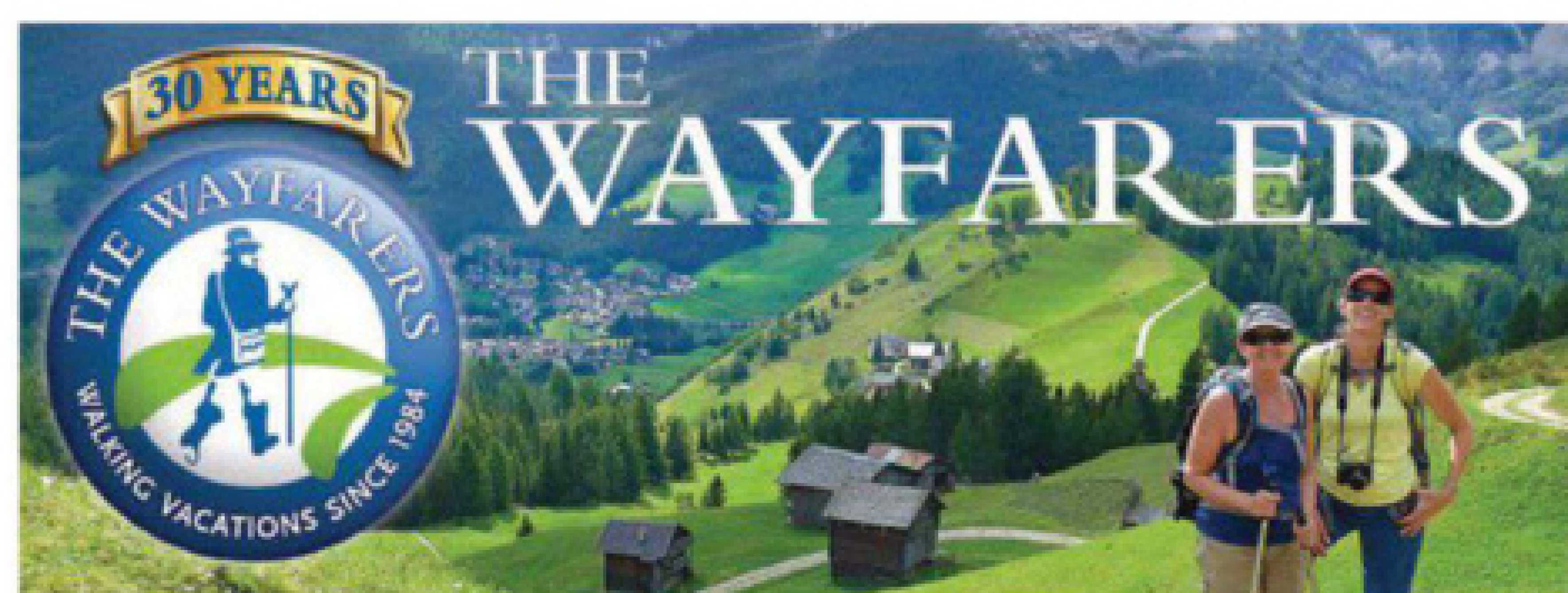
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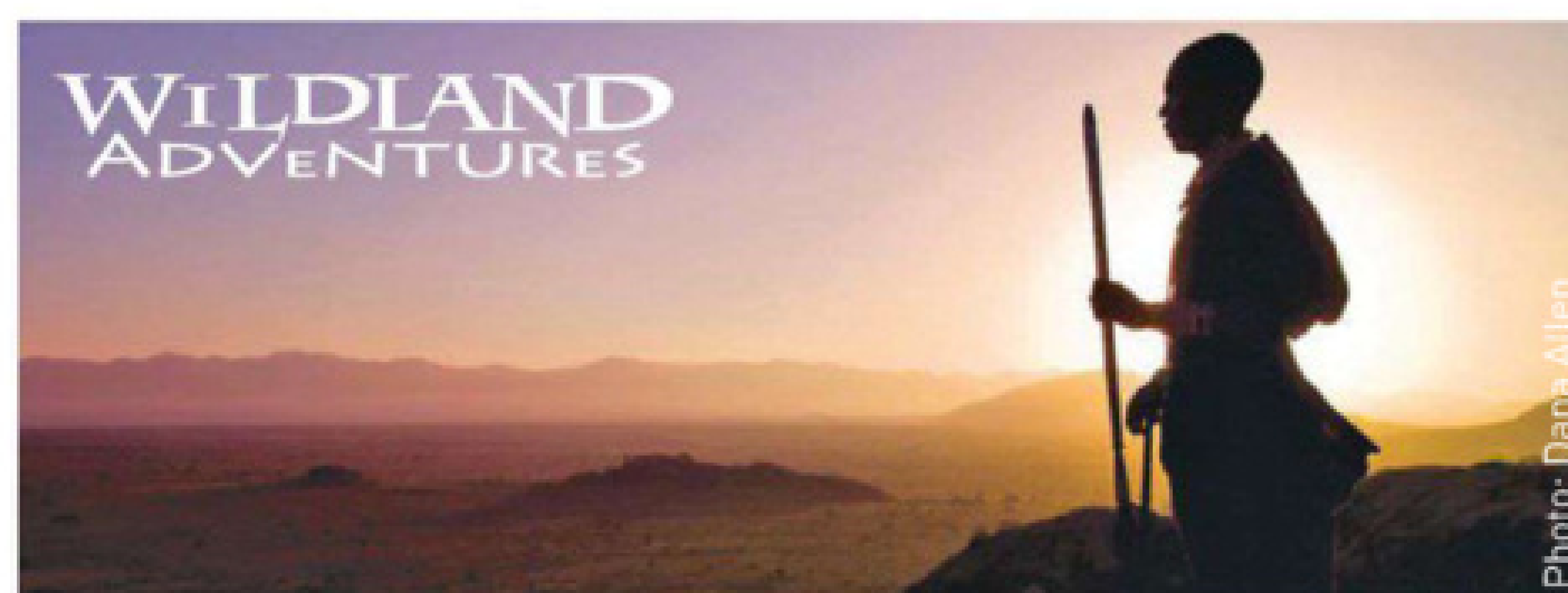
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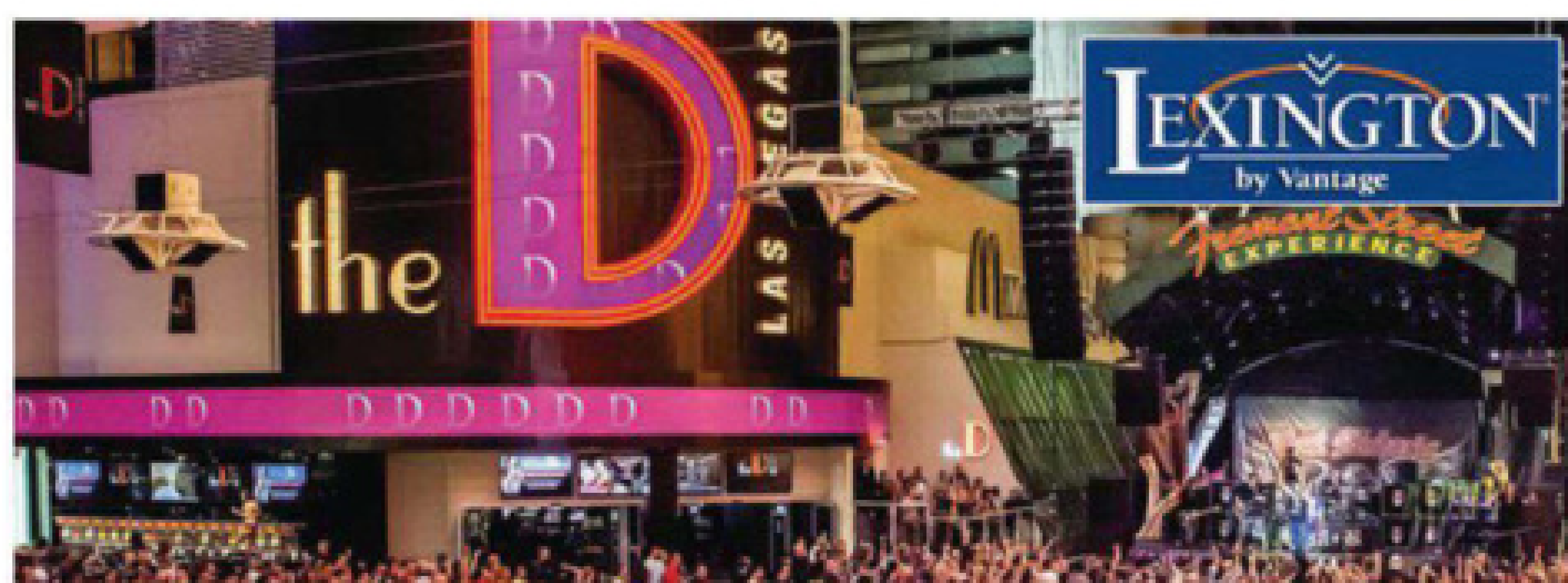
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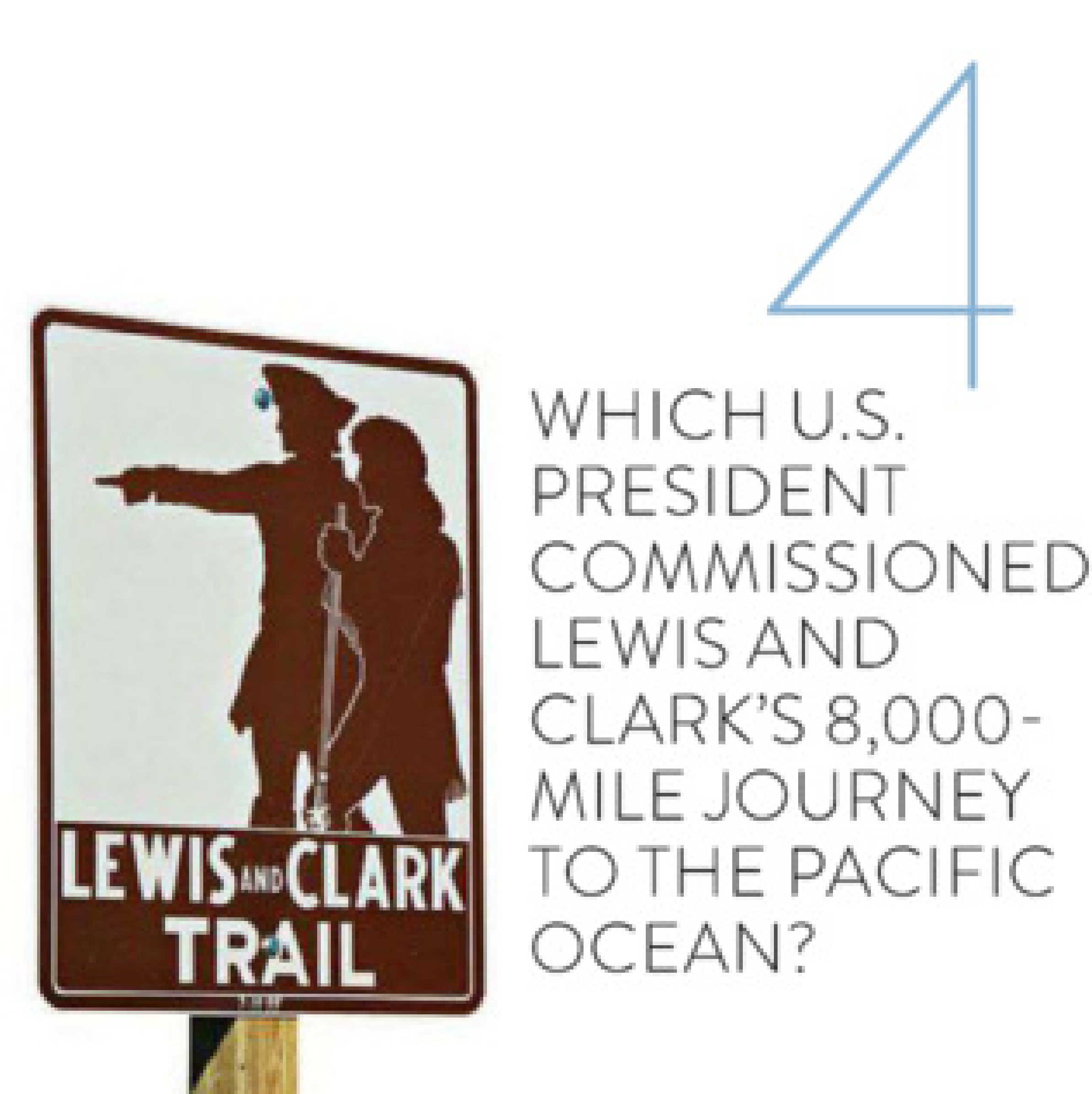


LOCALS ON THE ISLE OF LEWIS IN SCOTLAND'S OUTER HEBRIDES ARE FAMOUS FOR WEAVING WHAT WOOL FABRIC?

MADE OF GIN, SWEET VERMOUTH, AND CAMPARI, WHAT COCKTAIL WAS INVENTED IN FLORENCE IN 1919 AND NAMED FOR AN ITALIAN COUNT?



THE WORD "SERENDIPITY" COMES FROM THE ARABIC NAME, SERENDIB, OF WHAT ISLAND?



WHICH U.S. PRESIDENT COMMISSIONED LEWIS AND CLARK'S 8,000-MILE JOURNEY TO THE PACIFIC OCEAN?



GREAT BASIN BRISTLECONE PINES, THE WORLD'S OLDEST LIVING TREES, GROW IN THE WHITE MOUNTAINS OF WHAT STATE?



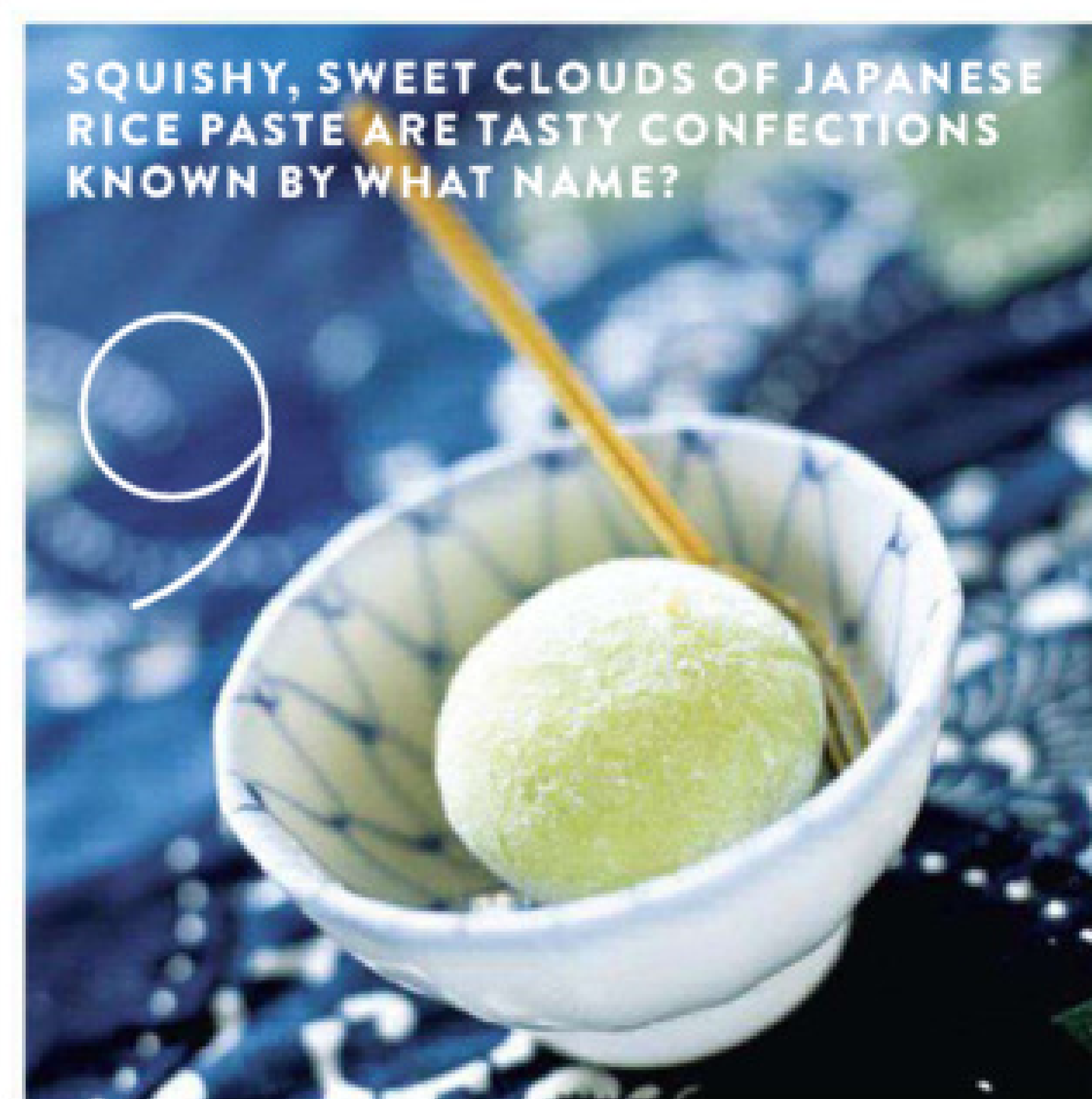
WHAT PEDAL-POWERED SPORT CHAMPIONSHIP WILL BE HELD THIS SUMMER IN MONTREAL?



WHAT KIND OF LIVESTOCK DID THE XHOSA OF SOUTH AFRICA FORMERLY USE AS CURRENCY?



ACCORDING TO PLINY THE ELDER, THE CANARY ISLANDS ARE NAMED NOT FOR BIRDS BUT FOR WHAT FOUR-LEGGED CREATURES?



SQUISHY, SWEET CLOUDS OF JAPANESE RICE PASTE ARE TASTY CONFECTIONS KNOWN BY WHAT NAME?

ANSWERS 1. Harris tweed 2. Negroni 3. Sri Lanka 4. Thomas Jefferson 5. California 6. unicycling 7. cattle 8. canines 9. mochi

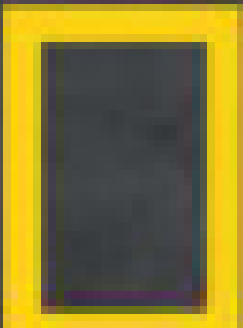
THE HARRIS TWEED AUTHORITY (WOOL), JONATHAN GAYMAN (DRINK), FILMLANDSCAPE/SHUTTERSTOCK (FISHERMEN), CONNIE RICCA/ CORBIS (SIGN), RICHARD OLSEN/NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC/GETTY IMAGES (BRANCH), TOPIC PHOTO AGENCY/CORBIS (UNICYCLE), CUAN HANSEN/GETTY IMAGES (HOMES), ENE/SHUTTERSTOCK (BIRDS), JONELLE WEAVER/GETTY IMAGES (FOOD)

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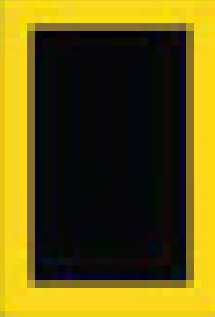
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